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King reaffirms rejection of separate peace

Arafat underlines confederation concept, urges King to seek

U.S. intervention in peace process in meeting with Clinton

Peres backtracks on claim of accord with Jordan, suggests meeting with Sharaa and return of more long-term Palestinian expellees



His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday greets Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (Photo by Yusef Al 'Allan)

By P.V. Vivekanand with agency dispatches

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday dismissed as distorted and inaccurate an Israeli assertion that the Jewish state and Jordan had agreed on a peace accord, and reaffirmed the Kingdom's negotiations with Israel could advance only after tangible progress has been made in the Palestinian-Israeli track of the 19-month-old Middle East peace process.

"When all the circles are completed regarding all the issues, primarily the Palestinians' right on their national soil, then it is possible to advance," the King told the press after two rounds of meetings with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

The King reiterated Jordan's commitment to the Palestinian cause. "We have a just and com-

mon cause, and we will do everything in our power to defend it," he said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who asserted Sunday that Jordan and Israel had reached a peace agreement, was meanwhile reported to backing off from the claim.

The Jerusalem Post, an English-language Israeli daily, reported Tuesday that Mr. Peres on Monday "backed off his own statement a day before, suggesting that a Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty was just waiting to be signed."

Peres said that he was referring only to a framework accord, the Post reported. It did not say where and when the foreign minister had made the statement.

In an agreement reached in October on a draft agenda for its track of negotiations with Israel,

Jordan has only agreed that the objective of the peace talks is the signing of a peace treaty. However, this "framework accord had never been finalised due to the continued stalemate in the Palestinian talks," the Post acknowledged.

King Hussein said Tuesday that work was still under way on the Jordanian-Israeli agenda "to put in an acceptable formula."

Mr. Arafat, meanwhile, referred to the possibility of a future confederation between Jordan and a Palestinian state to be created in the now-Israeli-occupied territories.

Describing Jordanian-Palestinian relations as unique, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) noted that resolutions adopted by the Palestine National Council,

(Continued on page 10)



His Majesty King Hussein, accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah and members of the Royal Family, Prime Minister Abdel Salam Al Majali and senior officials, at the Royal Palace Tuesday where he hosted a lunch as part of celebration of Prince Abdullah's wedding on Thursday (Petra photo)

King hosts lunch for wedding guests

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday hosted a lunch at the Royal Court in honour of senior military and civil officials, tribal chiefs and refugee elders.

The lunch, which was hosted as part of celebrations of His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah's marriage which

will take place Thursday, was also attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdulla, Prince Faisal, Prince Ali, Prince Hamzeh and Prince Hashim, sons of King Hussein, as well as the Private Chamberlain Prince Ali Ben Nayef, King Hussein's military advisor, His Royal Highness Prince

Talal Ben Mohammad, His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Muhammad, former Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Prime Minister Abdel Salam Al Majali, speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament and senior government officials as well as invited guests and journalists.

Hoar in Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — Lieutenant-General Joseph Hoar, commander of the U.S. Central Command, arrived in Amman Tuesday on a several-day visit to Jordan. Gen. Hoar, who is accompanied by an official delegation, was welcomed upon arrival by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Jordanian Armed Forces, Lieutenant-General Abdul Hafez Mirai and senior army officers as well as U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Roger Harrison.

Kuwait says it will execute 5 Iraqis

KUWAIT (R) — Death sentences imposed by a Kuwait court on five Iraqis for aiding Iraq's 1990 invasion would be carried out after authorisation from the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported Tuesday. It quoted Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah as saying: "Any death sentence will be executed after the signature of his highness the Emir of Kuwait." The five men may still appeal against their sentence to the appeal court, which has the authority to commute the sentence to a term of imprisonment. The state security court Sunday found the five guilty of trying to recruit Kuwaitis to join Iraq's ruling Baath Party following Iraq's August 1990 invasion.

Vranitzky in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky arrived in Israel Tuesday, marking the first time the head of the Austrian government has ever made an official visit to the Jewish state. "This is definitely an indication of the change in the relations between our two countries," Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said as he prepared to greet Mr. Vranitzky at Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv. "We certainly welcome this visit." Relations between the two countries have warmed since President Kurt Waldheim left office last July after not seeking reelection.

Plane crashes in Sudan, 11 killed

KHARTOUM (AP) — A plane hired by a gold-mining company crashed Tuesday in eastern Sudan, killing all 11 people aboard including five Westerners, the official Sudan News Agency said. The agency said victims were the pilot, a New Zealander, and officials of the Aribat Gold Mines Co., a French-Sudanese joint venture. It said the plane went down at Aribat airstrip, about 450 kilometres east of the capital Khartoum. The agency quoted Abdul Aziz Ahmad Osman, the company's general director, as saying the plane crashed shortly after takeoff and caught fire. "It split in half," he said. "Four of the passengers were flung out."

Officials deny discussing changes to Election Law

Deputies meet today for consultations

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Government officials said Tuesday that the Cabinet had not discussed amending the Election Law.

"I can assure you that as far as government is concerned, there has been no discussion of amending or changing the Election Law," Information Minister Ma'an Abn Nowar told the Jordan Times.

Dr. Abu Nowar and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Jawad Al Anani both categorically denied a report carried by the Jordan Times and the London-based Al Hayat daily Tuesday. The report quoted unidentified sources as saying that a committee headed by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali had recommended changes to the law.

"There is no such committee whatsoever," Dr. Abu Nowar said.

"(The reported committee) does not exist," Dr. Anani told the Jordan Times, confirming that the Cabinet had not discussed any changes to the Election Law.

The report claimed that the committee recommended amending the Election Law to introduce a one-man-one-vote system, lower the voting age from 19 to 18 and cancel an article banning

members of "illegal organisations" from contesting parliamentary elections.

It quoted "informed sources" as expecting the amendments to be introduced into the law after the return of His Majesty King Hussein from a trip he is scheduled to make to the United States next week.

The report is "completely untrue," said Dr. Abn Nowar. Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat said Monday Dr. Majali had assured him that no decision to amend the Election Law had been taken by the government.

"The prime minister said the government had not taken any decision (on changing the law) and that any move in this context would be preceded by consultations in which everybody would participate," Dr. Arabiyat told the Jordan Times after a meeting with Dr. Majali.

The prime minister's assurances, however, do not seem assuring enough to Jordan's largest political movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, which is seeking an extraordinary session of the House to ensure that the law would not be changed through a temporary legislation.

Infuriated Brotherhood Deputy Hammam Sa'id told the Jordan Times Tuesday that the Brotherhood would seek the support of

other parliamentarians in requesting an extraordinary session of the House during a meeting of deputies to discuss this issue Wednesday.

The mandate of the House runs till mid-November and the Constitution stipulates that an extraordinary session could be held at the request of 41 deputies or more.

Member of Parliament and former Prime Minister, Taher Al Masri, said the meeting was called to "hold consultations among ourselves," and not to agree on a request for an extraordinary session.

Dr. Arabiyat, a Brotherhood leader, said no agenda had been set for the meeting, which he said was being held at the request of a number of deputies to discuss "a number of issues."

In a statement it issued after a meeting of its members Tuesday, the Brotherhood said: "Any amendment to the Election Law should go through the legislative organisations in order to protect national unity."

Dr. Sa'id said Brotherhood members were not satisfied with Dr. Majali's assurances that change would be introduced only after consulting with all sectors of society.

"Consultation is a broad term.

(Continued on page 2)

Clinton to play 'personal' role in peace process

AMMAN (J.T.) — U.S. President Bill Clinton, in an interview with the Israeli newspaper, Davar, has promised to personally intervene in the Middle East peace talks that resume in Washington next week. The president was quoted as saying he saw chances for progress since both Israeli and Syrian leadership have confidence in the U.S.

He said moderate Palestinians were convinced that reaching peace is the only alternative for the agenda of the radicals.

He said Palestinians were facing tremendous pressure but despite that they are doing all what they can to achieve peace.

President Clinton also said he was ready to provide both Israel and Syria with security guarantees in the Golan Heights.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has told the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations that the U.S. will demonstrate "by its deeds" during the upcoming round of Middle East peace talks that the talks are a priority for the Clinton administration.

"The peace process is front and centre in our minds, and we will demonstrate this by our deeds in the weeks ahead," sources quoted Mr. Christopher as telling conference chairman Lester Polack and executive director Malcolm Hoelen in a 40-minute meeting Monday, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Mr. Christopher said it would be "a great loss to the peace process if the U.S. would not be involved." The secretary of state,

who was joined into the meeting by top aides, voiced confidence that progress would be made in the upcoming round.

Mr. Christopher said the Arabs and Israelis have already agreed to come to the talks which resume in the U.S. next Tuesday. The Arab parties, however, fell short of formally announcing the participation at a foreign ministers meeting in Amman.

These remarks on greater U.S. involvement coincide with reports that Mr. Christopher plans to increase the U.S. profile in talks with Syria, and not only with the Palestinians, the Post said.

Furthermore, his words also seemed designed to dispel recent remarks by Undersecretary for Political Affairs Peter Taroff, who last month told reporters the U.S. would only intervene abroad commensurate with its vital national and economic interests.

In preliminary parallel talks, among U.S., Palestinian, and Israeli negotiators this week, and once peace talks resume on June 15, the first order of business on the Palestinian track is to reach an Israeli-Palestinian joint document outlining agreement on principles.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin denied allegations by Labour faction deputies that he had suggested upgrading the delegation heads in the Washington negotiations to the foreign minister level.

Prices of kerosene, fuel oil and jet fuel increased

AMMAN (Petra) — The government Tuesday announced increases in the prices of some oil products as with immediate effect.

Minister of Supply Radi Ibrahim said the rise covers kerosene, fuel oil used by the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) and the Irbid District Electric Company and jet fuel sold to Royal Jordanian.

Under the increases, approved by the Cabinet, a litre of kerosene will be sold for 90 fils, up from 75 fils, and a litre of jet fuel will be sold for 95 fils, up from 80 fils. A tonne of fuel oil will be sold for JD 49, up from JD 43.

Mr. Ibrahim said the increase in prices falls within the government plans to reduce irrational consumption of kerosene and to avoid adulteration by some fuel stations and fuel distributors who used to mix diesel oil with kerosene to make profits.

A litre of diesel oil is sold for 105 fils. Mr. Ibrahim said the government had formed a special committee grouping representatives of the ministries of energy and mineral resources, finance, planning and social development to work out a mechanism to compensate low-income groups for the increase in price of kerosene, widely used for heating and cooking purposes.

Oil found near Dead Sea, page 3

More fighting in Somalia as U.N. sharpens its teeth

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Gunmen opened fire on U.N. military headquarters Tuesday and met with a machine-gun barrage as clashes with Somali gunmen kept the city on edge and raised fears of more violence.

Pakistan flew home the bodies of 23 peacekeepers killed in a weekend shootout with Somali gunmen and the U.N. boned plans to go after militiamen blamed for the murders.

At a sombre ceremony at Mogadishu international airport, representatives of several of other countries currently serving in the 24-nation peacekeeping force turned out to bid their fallen comrades farewell.

A Muslim cleric first recited Islamic prayers before all 23 aluminium coffins, each bearing a small United Nations flag on top, were carried across the tarmac to the sound of a bugle call and loaded on to a waiting plane.

Turkish Lieutenant General Cevik Bir, commander of U.N. forces in the broken Horn of Africa country, attended the brief service at which no speeches were made.

Gen. Bir has accused Mogadishu warlord Mohammad Farah Aidede and his men of responsibility for the slayings which he said took place after a series of coordinated ambushes.

U.N. sources said the world body, its authority challenged by one of the bloodiest incidents in the history of peacekeeping operations, would strike back "within a matter of days."

A big push is expected, the U.N. can simply not let this go. Too much — like Bosnia and Cambodia — is at stake," said one source who asked not to be

named. Foreign aid workers and U.N. personnel said the United Nations operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) would boost its military hardware and then go after Gen. Aidede and his supporters with an overwhelming show of force.

U.S. C-130 galaxy military transport planes are expected to begin flying in reinforcements, tanks and armoured personnel carriers later Tuesday.

Two Somalis died Monday in battles outside Pakistani military headquarters, and before dawn Tuesday snipers using machineguns and small arms began firing at U.N. military headquarters in the old U.S. embassy compound, said U.S. Army Major David Stockwell.

Helicopters took to the skies and swooped low over the city with searchlights while troops fired in the direction of the snipers. There were no reports of casualties. Maj. Stockwell said the gunmen apparently were firing from two locations simultaneously.

Low-flying helicopters continued to patrol after sunrise Tuesday, but there were no military vehicles on the crowded streets.

Barricades and burned-out cars littered the streets and foreign relief workers were nowhere to be seen, most having been evacuated after Sunday's firefight.

Pakistan has complained its soldiers were left to fend for themselves for hours after being ambushed Saturday. But Maj. Stockwell defended the response of the U.S.'s elite Quick Reaction Force (QRF), a 1,100-man team specially trained to deal with such uprisings.

Gulf war 'returnees' to be factor in Jordan ballot

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — Gulf war "returnees" — Jordanians forced to leave Kuwait — are expected to be a moderating factor in Jordan's first multi-party parliamentary election in three decades.

"Ninety-five per cent of them will not vote for anyone aligned to the Islamic current or Iraq," said Tawfiq Abu Bakr, a member of the Palestinian parliament-in-exile and a former prominent activist in Kuwait.

Seventeen political parties including the Muslim Brotherhood, pan-Arabists and leftists will stand in Jordan's November ballot. Many of the groups backed the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Nearly 300,000 Jordanians left or were forced out from Kuwait after Iraq invaded the emirate. Mostly of Palestinian origio, their families had

moved to Kuwait after the 1948 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars.

They acquired their Jordanian citizenship between 1948 and 1967 when the West Bank was part of Jordan. In their adopted homeland of Kuwait, where many were born, they had no prospect of becoming Kuwaitis.

Although many Palestinians in Kuwait emotionally supported Iraq, those who were thrown out in punishment for PLO and Jordanian support for Baghdad are bitter over the invasion and tired of war, political analysts say.

"They will vote for moderates who will adopt economic issues, or ways to integrate them into the society and who will present a potential for improving ties with the Gulf," Mr. Abn Bakr said.

Officials estimate that at least half of the nearly 150,000 eligible voter returnees are expected to cast a ballot, about

the same level of participation expected from the general population of the Kingdom.

The majority of returnees, twice scarred by the Arab-Israeli conflict, would also back candidates supporting Middle East peace efforts, officials said.

"Over the past four decades, what did we get from opposing Israel's existence and from sticking to the war option to liberate Palestine," asked housewife Jamilah Jadallah, who went to Kuwait after the 1967 war.

"Let us give diplomacy a chance, maybe talks will do some good."

Prominent returnees have begun charting strategies to back candidates. But relatively new to the country and with little power base, none has shown a desire to stand in the first general multi-party elections since 1957.

"Most of them will cast conservative votes... they will be in favour of moderation in all

its aspects," said Taher Al Masri, a long-time deputy and former prime minister.

Despite their large numbers, Palestinians have traditionally been under-represented in Jordan's political system, now dominated by Islamists. Many see the ballot as an opportunity to make their voices heard.

Many of the returnees are struggling to make ends meet in a small country of about 3.9 million people facing a huge foreign debt and a dramatic rise in poverty and unemployment.

But the influx has also created pockets of prosperity.

Their dollars have flooded the market, boosting the dinar, and savings used to build homes have fuelled a construction boom. Some have opened small businesses or found jobs in the private sector.

Unlike Palestinian refugees whose harsh living conditions in camps in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon generally contributed

to a hardening of political views, the wealthy emirate's Palestinian community formed a moderate professional class.

Higher living standards, social mobility, exposure to diverse cultures and a relatively liberal press infused moderation and conservatism among the well-educated community.

Muslim fundamentalist movements, feeding on growing poverty and political despair had a minimal presence in Kuwait, officials said.

"Most returnees are supportive of the present state of affairs in Jordan, the democracy and openness," declared Mohammad Mulhem, a prominent lawyer who lived in Kuwait for more than two decades.

But some, such as driver Mohammad Salem, are too bitter to vote.

"Damn all these politicians. What have they done for us apart from landing us in this misery," he asked.

Turkey decrees limited amnesty for rebels; PKK declares war

ANKARA (R) — Turkey announced a limited amnesty for Kurdish guerrillas Tuesday despite a surge in violence which killed 530 people in the past five days.

A government decree said that amnesty would not be granted to those who had committed acts of violence.

The earlier government draft provided for reduced sentences for all Kurdish guerrillas who gave themselves up, regardless of their military activities, but this clause was stripped out of the version published Tuesday.

The decree did not mention the PKK (Kurdish Labour Party) by name but said it applied to the emergency rule region in the southeast where a Kurdish revolt has smouldered for nine years.

It was published before the Turkish government heard that the head of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, had announced the PKK was resuming all-out war against Turkey.

At a news conference in eastern Lebanon, Mr. Ocalan said the guerrillas considered the unilateral ceasefire they declared in March had failed.

Mr. Ocalan blamed the Turkish government for the collapse of the ceasefire, which he had unilaterally declared on the occasion of Nowruz, the Kurdish new year.

He said the renewed violence meant the "death of hope" for a settlement to the nine-year conflict, sparked by the PKK's campaign for self-rule for Turkey's 10 million Kurds.

Some 200 rebels reportedly have been killed by the army in southeastern Turkey in the past week.

"It will be Turkey's bloodiest summer ever," Mr. Ocalan told a packed news conference at a house in Bari-Ellas.

"This will be our response if the Ankara government fails to quickly rein in its army's current campaign against us," said Mr. Ocalan, who drove into the Bekaa Valley from Damascus.

"We shall strike back with all-out war. We shall hit economic and tourism interests throughout Turkey," he said.

"We have adhered to the ceasefire, but the Turkish government failed to reciprocate. So the truce collapsed altogether and we have no other choice but to escalate the hostilities," said Mr. Ocalan, donning a khaki military uniform.

Ankara says the truce collapsed when rebels attacked a bus in Turkey's southeastern Bingol province, killing 33 soldiers and two civilians.

But the PKK rebels have claimed that the attack was mounted because the Turkish government had not respected the ceasefire.

"We now have 10,000 well-armed fighters confronting the Turkish army on 15 battle fronts in southeast Turkey. We also have thousands of militiamen backing our frontline fighters," Mr. Ocalan said.

Ankara has refused to negotiate peace with the Kurds or consider their demands for self-rule.

goods and food, ranging from satellite television dishes to bananas, along the 400-kilometre Syrian border with Lebanon.

Security sources said Syria had cancelled hundreds of passes issued by various ministries in Damascus, which allowed Lebanese and Syrians to drive over the border from Lebanon on a special military road where vehicles were usually not searched.

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri said Damascus had cancelled the passes, which had accumulated over the years until even such people as bird hunters had retrieved them from Syria.

"They have been cancelled. We are not going to give passes to anyone," he told Reuters. Asked whether this was the first time the passes were revoked, he said: "I think so. This is the largest operation."

"We made a joint operation, us and the Syrians, to cut all smuggling and end all kind of irregular and illegal activities," said Mr. Hariri, adding he believed the sweep was over in Lebanon.

"We have made several such operations with the Syrians but this last one was significant because it was very big," he said.

Smuggling and the drugs trade thrived in eastern Lebanon during the 1975-90 civil war.

Military sources said 1,000 Lebanese troops arrested about 50 suspected smugglers and gangsters in northern Lebanon and closed 16 illegal ports on the Mediterranean coast last month.

They said an operations room would be set up by the Lebanese army and police in two weeks to coordinate the war on smugglers and the closure of dirt roads over the border used by them.

Troops removed a large number of kiosks which used to sell smugglers' goods on the Lebanese side of the border, they added.

Rafsanjani looks set for reelection

TEHRAN (R) — Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a mullah trying to end Iran's international isolation and move it towards a free market economy, looks set for an easy victory in Friday's presidential elections.

Iranian analysts and foreign diplomats said the 59-year-old president appears to be coasting towards a second five-year term.

In a rare opinion poll the newspaper Abrar said Tuesday he would capture 54 per cent of the vote, well ahead of his strongest challenger, economic writer Ahmad Tavakkoli, with 15 per cent.

Mr. Rafsanjani is one of four presidential candidates approved by Iran's clerical Council of Guardians — guaranteeing their credentials as true sons of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

But none of the other three has the stature or power base of Mr. Rafsanjani, who was among the early companions of the father of the revolution Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, and has held high office from its early days.

The other three all say they broadly support Mr. Rafsanjani's policies. The analysts said they offer no real alternative for any Iranian who might wish to see change in Iran.

Radicals, Mr. Rafsanjani's main rivals and opponents of his economic liberalisation, have stayed away from the race.

They would like Iran to return to the anti-Western militancy of the early revolutionary years and are the only significant establishment group not to have endorsed his candidacy.

The analysts said radicals were still licking their wounds after their decisive defeat in last year's parliamentary elections.

The main remaining question is how many people will bother to vote. Abrar's survey showed a likely turnout of 78 per cent of some 20 million eligible voters, well above the 60 per cent or so who cast ballots in the parliamentary poll.

Such a turnout would be a triumph for Iran's leaders. They fear voter apathy and a low turnout may undermine Mr. Rafsanjani's credibility at home and abroad and his ability to push through vital economic and institutional reforms.

The analysts said most Iranians see Mr. Rafsanjani as the most acceptable choice, but his government's popularity is at a particularly low point mainly due to Iran's persistent economic problems: High inflation, low wages, inefficient state industries and the shortage of foreign exchange.

Mr. Rafsanjani, in his second and final election broadcast on Monday night, reminded voters of his prediction on assuming office four years ago that it would take a decade to rebuild the economy after the costly 1980-88 war with Iraq.

"I hope that at the end of the second term the country will be in a totally different shape than it was at the beginning," he said.

A measure of the disenchantment was shown in the Abrar poll which indicated that 18 per cent of voters were likely to cast blank ballot papers.

The three challengers say they are serious contenders and that the electorate might yet spring some surprises.

Mr. Tavakkoli is challenging Mr. Rafsanjani from the right, calling for speedier reforms, lean government and big cuts in public spending.

Abdullah Jasbi, who heads Iran's thriving Azad private university and is believed to have a significant following among young people, was expected by Abrar to take 14 per cent.

Rajabali Taheri, a former member of parliament likely to be remembered for breaking the taboo on advocating direct talks with the United States, will get one per cent, Abrar forecast.

The trial was held in one of three secret courts specially set up to deal with "terrorist" cases. FIS members and sympathisers continue to skirmish almost daily with police and soldiers in Algeria.

"It's clear there was pressure on the German government from Algeria," the FIS source in Germany said. "Certain parties were able to convince the German government to try and rid itself of Mr. Kebir, it's completely political."

A son of jailed front leader Abassi Madani was also arrested by German police 10 days ago and remains in custody, according to the source.

Oussama Madani, 22, was arrested May 27 by German border police who showed him an international arrest warrant issued by the International Police Organisation (INTERPOL).

"They wanted to extradite him, but in the end they didn't have the courage," the source said.

The younger Madani was studying German in order to attend a German university, the source said.

Mr. Kebir, 37, was a high-ranking member of the FIS which was banned in Algeria early last year after it was about to sweep to victory in elections for a new national assembly.

An army-backed committee took power after forcing cancellation of the second round of voting in the legislative election and outlawed the front, whose top leaders were already in jail.

Mr. Kebir fled Algeria in August, 1992 and has lived in Germany for the past 10 months. He has given news conferences and issued four communiques during that time, but was not involved in activities that would have embarrassed or angered the German government, according to the sources.

He was not allowed to leave Germany under the conditions of his stay in the country, the sources said.

Mr. Kebir was given the death sentence in absentia last month during a trial in Algeria involving a bomb attack on Algiers' international airport in August, 1992 that killed nine people and injured 128.

Iraq's neighbours fear chaos in Kurdish area

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iraq's three neighbours that border its northern Kurdish enclave said after a meeting in Tehran Monday they were concerned continued chaos there was threatening their own security.

The foreign ministers of Syria, Iran and Turkey said in a joint communiqué they supported the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and would continue to oppose its dismemberment.

The three states, which have restive Kurdish minorities of their own, said they were "concerned about the impact on our own countries' security due to the lack of authority" in the Kurdish north that is outside the control of the Iraqi government.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, whose country is fighting Kurdish separatist guerrillas, said: "No country can tolerate any terrorist activity."

He said the end of the 1991 Gulf war had brought neither peace nor stability to north Iraq, and he pledged that his country would continue to strike if necessary at separatist bases in Iraq.

Iran and Turkey have carried out separate air strikes on Iraqi territory since the Gulf war to hit guerrilla bases used for mounting attacks on their respective countries.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said the three states needed to consult on the situation in north Iraq because the chaotic situation there had not changed in the past two years.

"We do not want to interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq... but we are determined to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our own countries," said Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

The ministers said their officials would continue to meet regularly to monitor the situation in north Iraq and that they would meet again in Istanbul in November to review the situation.

The three countries have held three meetings on the situation in Iraq since October.

Since Baghdad's defeat in the Gulf war over Kuwait, Kurds have set up a de facto autonomous region in northern Iraq. Gulf war allies have declared a "no-fly" zone in the Kurdish north and another in the south to protect Shi'ite Muslims.

U.N. officials said last month the world body was pulling out guards from northern Iraq as a first step to halting its aid programme in the Kurdish-held region due to lack of funds.

"The aim of our efforts has been to defuse tension in the region and prevent Iraq's disintegration," Mr. Velayati was quoted as saying during Monday's meeting.

But Mr. Velayati also voiced concern over Baghdad's "repressive policies" against the Kurds in northern Iraq. The central government has imposed an economic blockade on the area in an effort to undermine the separatist efforts by the Kurds.

The 20 million Kurds, an Indo-European race, are spread around five states — to 10 million in Turkey, 5.5 million in Iran, 3.5 million in Iraq, with small enclaves in Syria and the Soviet Union. They share a common language, related to Iran's Farsi tongue, and are overwhelmingly Sunni Muslims.

In other remarks, Mr. Velayati said that Iran does not oppose the so-called Damascus declaration — a 2-year-old pact under which tens of thousands of Egyptian and Syrian troops were supposed to form the nucleus of a Gulf defence force.

The Iranians in the past have criticised any Gulf security arrangement that leaves them out, as the Damascus pact did, although they also hoped to be included in the security arrangements eventually.

Mr. Velayati also said relations between Britain and Iran could improve if the British government does nothing to "provoke" by raising the issue of the Iranian death sentence against author Salman Rushdie.

"If they do not provoke the question of Salman Rushdie, I don't think we need to have such a tense situation and tense relations," Mr. Velayati said.

He said the fatwa imposed on Mr. Rushdie by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for allegedly defaming Islam in the novel "The Satanic Verses" could not be lifted.

"This is a religious position and will not change," Mr. Velayati said.

Rebels say they blow up Iranian oil pipelines

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's opposition Mujahideen-e-Khalq group said Tuesday its fighters blew up 11 Iranian oil pipelines and killed or wounded scores of Revolutionary Guards to avenge the assassination of one of its members in Pakistan.

In a second wave of sabotage attacks ahead of Iran's presidential elections Friday, the group said its fighters destroyed pipelines in the main oil producing province of Khuzestan and the western Kermanshah province Monday morning.

In Bayat region in northern Khuzestan, eight pipelines were blown up, sending up flames which could be seen many kilometres away, the group said in a statement sent to Reuters from its Paris office.

Three pipelines were destroyed in Naftshahr, a small oil field in Kermanshah near the border with Iraq, it said.

In the course of these operations at least 100 million in damages were inflicted on the Khomeini regime, the exile group said, referring to Iran's late revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

There was no immediate report of attacks from Iran's official media. Mujahideen accounts of events in Iran are difficult to check. They are rarely denied by the Iranian authorities and some times receive partial confirmation in the Tehran press.

The statement said Mujahideen fighters killed or wounded 130 Revolutionary Guards in separate attacks on two battalion headquarters near Mehran and Dehloran, border towns in Ilam province, and mine explosions and ambushes in nearby roads.

Near Dehloran, 500 kilometres southwest of Tehran, "a 30-metre tall communication tower used by the guards for eavesdropping was destroyed and all ammunition depots were blown up," it added.

Tebran said its fighter-bombers hit Mujahideen bases deep inside Iraq two weeks ago after the group blew up several oil pipelines in the southern part of Khuzestan.

Iran accused its former war enemy Iraq of letting Mujahideen saboteurs cross the border and attack its installations.

The air raid, which caused little damage and no Mujahideen casualties, provoked vows of reprisal from Baghdad.

King Hassan, U.N. envoy discuss Sahara

RABAT (R) — King Hassan of Morocco and United Nations envoy Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan Monday discussed plans to hold a referendum in the disputed Western Sahara, officials said. Details of their talks at the royal palace in Rabat were not immediately available. U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali proposed a compromise to settle the conflict in the former Spanish colony when he toured the area last week. At issue is who is eligible to vote in the referendum to decide whether the desert territory will be part of Morocco, which controls most of the area, or independent as demanded by Polisario guerrillas. Polisario wants voters limited more or less to about 74,000 people counted in a 1974 Spanish census, while Morocco wants to include up to 100,000 refugees it says fled Western Sahara during the Spanish colonial period. At a news conference after conferring with Dr. Ghali, Bachir Mustafa, chief of Polisario's number two, was reported as saying the U.N. chief's new proposals were "interesting and positive." Moroccan officials have not commented on the talks and neither side has revealed the content of the new U.N. proposals.

Lebanon hands war-wrecked homes to Gulf Arabs

ALEY, Lebanon (R) — Officials handed back nearly 300 war-damaged villas in Lebanon's Shouf Mountains to Gulf state ambassadors on Monday in a bid to attract visitors for the summer. Officials of the Ministry of the Displaced handed over 291 homes owned by nationals of Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in the Shouf Mountains southeast of Beirut. A total of 574 homes in the Shouf Mountains are owned by Gulf nationals and were abandoned during Lebanon's 15 years of civil war. Many of the once-luxurious homes are gutted or badly damaged. "This is a step we dreamed about for a long time so Kuwaitis and Gulf nationals can return to Lebanon," Kuwaiti Ambassador Ahmad Ghaith Abdullah said in the town of Aley, 12 kilometres southeast of Beirut. He said rebuilding the homes would begin soon. Aley was a summer resort and home to thousands of Gulf Arabs until fighting transformed it into a shell-shocked ghost town.

Policeman kills himself to avoid embarrassment

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — Medhat Mohammad Amin has committed suicide after having dinner at a lavish restaurant at the coastal city of Alexandria, according to a press report. Amin, a policeman, was invited to the dinner by a friend who works at the restaurant. After finishing his dinner consisting of chicken, macaroni and fruit salad, Amin was shocked when his friend, who apparently changed his mind, asked him to pay the bill. Amin went to the bathroom where he pulled his gun and shot himself in the head. He died instantly, the newspaper Al Gomharia reported in its Tuesday edition.

Belgium apologises to Britain

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgium has formally apologised to Britain for not providing 90,000 artillery shells in early 1991 as the government in London readied for the Gulf war, the government said Monday. Defence Minister Leo Delcroix "made the apology during a May 10-11 official visit to British Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind in London," said a Defence Ministry spokesman, confirming a report in the daily De Standaard. In early 1991, as the United States was forming an alliance of nations to oust Iraq from Kuwait, Belgium declined a British request to provide 90,000 artillery shells which it had in stock. The government of former Prime Minister Wilfried Martens said in January, 1991, it wanted to give "absolute priority to a diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis." In the end, it contributed some \$30 million in cash towards the allied war effort against Iraq. The refusal to provide shells soured Belgo-British relations. It coincided with negotiations among the European Community states to draft a common foreign and security policy which has since been enshrined in the Maastricht Treaty on European union.

Ethiopian refugees to go home from Sudan

KHARTOUM (R) — Some 23,000 Ethiopian refugees will be taken back to their homeland in an operation due to start Wednesday, the Khartoum newspaper Al Sudan Al Hadith reported Tuesday. It quoted the minister for refugees, Abdul Rahman Sir Al Khadim, as saying a camp at Al Hamra inside Ethiopia was ready to receive them. There are more than a million refugees in Sudan, about 300,000 of them from Ethiopia.

Officials deny discussing changes to law

(Continued from page 1)

President of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) Isbak Al Farhan also said that the IAF, under whose umbrella Brotherhood candidates would run for elections, had not adopted a final stand on the elections and would draw up its strategy after the government formally decides whether it would change the law.

Dr. Sa'id said that there was a broad agreement among Brotherhood members that the "temporary government" should not be given the mandate to decide on "issues of paramount national importance such as the elections and the (peace) negotiations."

Even though the Brotherhood did not formally whether a vote of confidence should be taken on the Majali government when and if an extraordinary session is convened, Dr. Sa'id said: "There is a general feeling among Brotherhood deputies that such a step could be necessary."

"A temporary government does not deal with dangerous issues. How could a temporary government speak about the most dangerous issues to the nation," he said.

As far as we are concerned, Parliament is the forum for consultation," he said.

The statement said it was still premature for the Brotherhood to decide on whether it will contest the elections, expected later this year, "and the movement will announce its position at the suitable time and in light of new developments and the general situation."

"Our decision to reject any temporary law is one of principle. We will reject a temporary law and we will resist it, but it is not yet decided how we will do that," Dr. Sa'id told the Jordan Times. He did not rule out boycotting the elections as a possible way resisting any change in the law.

Brotherhood Deputy Abdul Rahim Al Ekour said last week that the Brotherhood would boycott the elections if the law was changed. But the spokesman of the Brotherhood bloc at the House, Ibrahim Khreisat, later reiterated earlier Brotherhood statements that no such decision had been taken.

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:30 Jeddah (RJ)

10:45 Sharjah, Doha (GP)

11:00 Paris, Damascus (PI)

11:15 Beirut (ME)

11:30 Vienna, Larnaca (OS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

11:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

11:30 Rome (RJ)

11:45 London, Berlin (RJ)

12:00 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

12:15 Istanbul (RJ)

12:30 Colombo (RJ)

12:45 Agaba, Cairo (RJ)

13:00 Dhahran (RJ)

13:15 Frankfurt (RJ)

13:30 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

13:45 Brnass, Paris (RJ)

14:10 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

14:30 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)

14:45 Riyadh (RJ)

15:00 Sana'a (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:45 Dubai (AZ)

07:45 Beirut, Paris (AF)

07:55 Rome (AZ)

NEWS IN BRIEF

King Hassan, U.N. envoy discuss Sahara

Lebanon hands war-wrecked homes to Gulf Arabs

Policeman kills himself to avoid embarrassment

Belgium apologises to Britain

Ethiopian refugees to go home from Sudan

Officials deny discussing changes to law

Rebels say they blow up Iranian oil pipelines

Iraq's neighbours fear chaos in Kurdish area

Rafsanjani looks set for reelection

Turkey decrees limited amnesty for rebels; PKK declares war

Syria cracks down on Lebanon smuggling

Leading Algerian dissident held in Germany

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Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday presents awards to Jordan's nurses and midwives who have served their profession for 25 years (Petra photo)

Veteran nurses, midwives honoured at International Nursing Day event

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday attended a ceremony honouring nurses and midwives who have served in their profession for 25 years.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Health and the Jordan Nurses and Midwives Union, the ceremony was held at the Royal Cultural Centre on the occasion of International Nursing Day.

Established in 1972, the Jordanian Nurses and Midwives Union represents a total of 3,794 registered nurses and midwives (3,154 nurses and 640 midwives).

Members of the union are graduates from Jordanian universities and nursing schools, as well as from other Arab and foreign institutions.

The union is a member of the Professional Association as well as the International Council of Nursing.

At the ceremony, the Queen presented nurses and midwives with gifts and the union's shield; and she honoured four nurses with doctoral degrees. Queen Noor also presented a gift to the union's media consultant, Ibrahim Al Samman, in recognition of his services to the nursing profession.

Receiving the Queen at the ceremony were Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas, Secretary General of the Ministry of Health Adnan Abbas, and President of the Nurses and Midwives Union Nazeem Bzour.

The Queen was also received by members of the union's council, as well as by Royal Cultural Centre Director Iyad Kattan. Accompanying the Queen to the ceremony was Mrs. Abdul Salam Majali.



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday addresses a meeting of the Scouts and Girl Guides Association (Petra photo)

Princess Basma calls for boosting scouts, girl guides programmes

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday stressed the importance of Jordan's scout movement and called for intensifying efforts to develop scouts programmes and activities.

Addressing a general assembly meeting of the Scouts and Girl Guides Association held at the Teachers Club here, Princess Basma stressed the need for putting more emphasis on voluntary work, public service and developing skills and capacities of scouts and girl guides.

During the meeting the general assembly discussed the association's financial and administrative

reports and the planned strategy of the scouts movement until the year 2002.

The assembly also discussed the association's activities, achievements and future aspirations.

Participants formed two committees: one technical and the other financial. The technical committee was charged with examining proposals put forward to the general assembly's meetings, and the financial committee was asked to look into means of financing the construction of headquarters for the association at Hussein Youth City.

Also Tuesday Princess Basma attended the graduation of the 28th batch of students from Ajloun Community College.

The Princess opened a new building and garden named after her. She also inaugurated an art and folklore exhibition at the college.

At the end of the celebration certificates were presented to 510 students graduating from the college.

The graduation ceremony was attended by Minister of Education Khaled Al Omari, the Ajloun district governor and senior government officials from Ajloun.

Multidisciplinary look at Amman spurs further study of the city

By Samson Goshoh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The conference "Amman: The City and Society" was successful in creating a bridge between social scientists, urban planners and politicians hoping that this conference will be the start, and not the end, of other studies on the city, said organisers Tuesday in their concluding remarks.

The significance of this conference, according to Seteney Shami, professor of anthropology at Yarmouk University, is that it is an outcome of collective work, incorporating multidisciplinary aspects.

The three-day conference, co-sponsored by CERMO, the French Centre for Research on the Contemporary Middle East and the Department of Architecture and the Urban Planning Unit at the University of Jordan, focused its discussion Tuesday on the economy and society of Amman and the politics and policies of the city, attempting to produce a comprehensive overview of the rapidly developing urban centre.

"The theme of inequality was prevalent throughout the first session, entitled 'Economy and Society'."

Musa Ishtawi, professor of sociology at the University of Jordan, spoke on class structure and inequality in Amman, explaining that the former passed through three different phases which formed and reformed classes and blurred the distinction between them.

"The first phase, Dr. Ishtawi said, is the consolidation of the Jordanian state; the period when classes were formed, the existence of the state prior to the class structure allowed the former to shape the latter and set future class development, he added.

"The following two phases, one between 1948 and 1967 and the other after 1968, had no effect on the sizes of the upper, middle and working classes, but significantly affected their composition, Dr. Ishtawi maintained.

First Merchants, then business owners emerged as members of the upper class and superseded its older members such as the bureaucrats and government and military officials, he said. In addition, Dr. Ishtawi continued, the rise of the professional middle class at the expense of the bureaucratic middle class, recently became evident.

The wide gap between the upper class and the working class, comprising nine per cent and 60 per cent of the society, indicates the economic inequality of Amman, Dr. Ishtawi maintained.

Maintaining the theme of inequality, Mary Kavar, professor of economics at London University, spoke on the integration of young women in the labour force of Amman.

Young, single, urban women are the women most found in labour force, Dr. Kavar said.

Although female labour force participation has been consistently low, a breakdown by age reveals that there is a disproportionate participation of women between the ages of 20 and 29, she added.

Although holding higher education certificates and supplying a more diversified labour force, women have a smaller chance of becoming employed, Dr. Kavar said. Unemployment among women is double that among men, she added.

"The disproportionate weight of Amman in terms of Jordanian industry when compared to the rest of the country was the subject of the study by Rozanne Hommerly of CERMO."

In 1990, she said, studies estimated that 92.5 per cent of Jordanian industries were located in Amman, and thus a large percentage of the labour force was also present in the capital.

In spite of policies aimed at shifting the investment out of Amman, the city continues to attract investors because of its large population, its adequate transportation system and being the commercial and banking centre of the country.

But the importance of the industrial sector's presence in Amman was indirectly undermined by Reiner

Biegel, a faculty member at the Arts and Humanities Department at the University of Fez, who described Amman as a "rentier state" that periodically receives extensive, external financial aid.

All "rents," according to Dr. Reiner, were distributed and spent in the capital mainly in housing and trade, which created a rapid spatial and demographic growth and caused extreme centrality.

The shift of the commercial and banking sector from eastern Amman to the western Amman also contributed to the segregation of the city, he maintained.

The second session, entitled "politics and policies in Amman," addressed the lands available for housing, contested land in east Amman, and the position of Palestinian refugee camps as enclaves or districts in the city.

Munther Al Azmi, professor of architecture at the University of Jordan, criticised the local authorities for supplying new plots of land without taking into consideration development plans for the entire city. He particularly emphasised the lack of affordable land for low-income housing and the abundance of land for the high-income bracket, calling on the planners to correct the present imbalance.

Blondine Destramau of Urbama, Urbanisation of the Arab World, spoke on the identity of the two refugee camps surrounding Amman, stressing that they crystallise the double territorial identification of Palestinians.

She portrayed the difficulty of describing the camps as either quarters of Amman or enclaves within the city, but added that the refugee camps can be considered enclaves because their residents look at their situation as temporary and are waiting to return to their land. Yet, she added, when studying their economic integration within the city, these camps may be described as quarters.

Proceedings of the conference are expected to be published later, organisers said.

Prince Mohammad visits Majali, army unit

AMMAN (Petra) His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Tuesday met with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali at the Prime Ministry.

Prince Mohammad congratulated Dr. Majali on his new post as premier and wished him and his Cabinet good luck in carrying out their duty.



Prince Mohammad also visited the Fourth Royal Mechanised Division and was received by its commander and senior officers who briefed him on the duties

assigned to the division. The Prince later visited the Prince Mohammad Battalion and was familiarised with its training activities.

Cabinet forms delegation to Vienna human rights meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Sharif Fawaz Sharaf, Jordan's ambassador to the U.N. Geneva headquarters will head Jordan's delegation to the Vienna human rights conference due to open on June 14, according to a decision taken by the Council of Ministers and announced Tuesday.

The statement said that the delegation will include a group of prominent Jordanian individuals from the public and private sectors.

Informed sources said the delegation will include officials, parliamentarians, lawyers and human rights activists.

The Vienna conference, the first such gathering in 25 years, is being convened in line with a resolution adopted by the U.N. General Assembly.

It is expected that representatives of all U.N. member states will attend, including several heads of states.

Sources said that the meeting intends to focus on a global review of human rights, including political and civil rights.

The U.N. held the last such conference in Tehran 25 years ago.

The Arab group taking part in the conference is expected to present complaints about Israel's

arbitrary measures against the Palestinians living under its occupation.

The record of various countries in adhering to the international charter and the covenants on human rights will also be reviewed.

Jordan-Syria cultural agreement

Meanwhile, the Council of Ministers approved an executive programme for the implementation of a cultural and scientific cooperation agreement between Jordan and Syria and authorised Jordan's ambassador to Syria to sign the programme on behalf of the Jordanian government.

The council in its session Tuesday, formed a delegation to attend and participate in the work of the Yemeni-Jordanian Joint Committee that will discuss topics related to alternative and renewable energy due to be held in Sanaa, capital of Yemen, between June 19 and 23.

The team will be led by Abdul Wahab Al Zoubi, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources secretary general.

The Cabinet also Tuesday decided to send several officials of the Youth Division of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society to

Syria on a week-long visit next month.

It also decided to allocate a JD50 monthly grant to each scholarship student studying in the Russian Federation universities or other universities of the Commonwealth of Independent States as of April 1, 1993.

The total number of students on scholarship in Russia or the states of the former Soviet Union is 434 and the total sum to be offered to them will come up to JD810,000 annually.

Also according to the Cabinet, two officials from the Ministry of Transport will go to Cairo to represent Jordan at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) meetings due to be held between June 15 and 17.

In implementation of directives issued by His Majesty King Hussein, the Cabinet also approved allocating JD 70 million to the Military Housing Fund and JD 2 million to the Civil Defence Department Housing Fund. The allocations will be financed through loans from the Housing Bank and finances from the Central Bank of Jordan and will be extended to beneficiaries from the two funds at a maximum interest rate of 4.5 per cent, annually.

Germany agrees to fund technical, financial schemes at DM22m

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — German and Jordanian officials Tuesday ended two days of talks and consultations over German-financed projects in the Kingdom, agreeing to implement at least two technical projects this year and a financial one next year.

Matthias Meyer, counsellor at the German embassy in Amman, told the Jordan Times that agreement followed a general review of German-funded projects that are being executed and also new schemes or extension to the present plans, particularly in water, agriculture, institution-building and vocational training fields.

One of the technical projects is the setting up of a national information system at the Ministry of Planning to provide data to different government departments, said Mr. Meyer.

The scheme which is being initiated this year will take three years to complete, and Germany will provide DM1 million annually to cover the cost, he said.

Mr. Meyer also said Germany was providing expertise, equipment and training towards implementing the scheme.

The other technical project entails producing vegetable seeds to meet local needs with possible surpluses for export later, Mr. Meyer continued.

He said the two-year project, which is being initiated this year, will cost DM 1 million annually which will be paid by the German government.

Again the Germans will be providing expertise, equipment and training, added Mr. Meyer.

Referring to the financial project, Mr. Meyer said that Germany would be supplying at least DM22 million to finance one of the three major water supply projects for the Amman area.

He said actual work on the project is due next year, but discussions over the last two days

here covered preparations for its implementation.

Although the two sides signed a protocol on covering these projects Tuesday, a delegation of senior German officials will arrive here in November for the formal signing, Mr. Meyer said.

These agreements fall within the framework of a German government assistance programme to Jordan totalling around DM50 million, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Mr. Meyer said the five-member German team led by Gerd Robert Liptau represents the German Foreign Ministry, the German Bank for Reconstruction and Development (KfW), the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) as well as the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation.

Part of the team is leaving Amman Wednesday for the West Bank to inspect German-funded projects in the occupied Arab lands and the rest will return to Bonn.

The protocol was signed by Mr. Liptau and Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning Safwan Touqan.

Drillers strike oil near Dead Sea

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN (R) — Jordan oilmen have found small amounts of crude oil close to the surface at an exploratory oil well near the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, energy ministry sources said on Tuesday.

The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources would not release the initial results but the sources said the find was significant because it showed there may be more oil deeper down, under a layer of salt 4,000 to 5,000 metres thick.

"They were drilling an exploratory well in Ein Al-Homr in the upper eastern part of the Dead Sea in mid-May when they found crude oil after over 300 metres," one source told Reuters.

"It was of good quality and low in sulphur," he added.

The oilmen, working for the government's Natural Resources Authority (NRA), are drilling towards a target depth of 1,000 metres and will take samples along the way.

An energy ministry official declined to comment on the find

before the drilling was over and the studies were complete.

"It is too early to comment... we need at least six months to establish final facts," the official told Reuters.

Jordan has no significant proven reserves and imports about 50,000 barrels of crude oil a day from Iraq.

It produces 275 barrels a day from two exploratory wells near the Saudi border and has sizeable quantities of natural gas.

One source said the recent discovery could indicate that pressure under the thick layer of salt "had led to oil seepages that might have produced reservoirs of possible significant commercial quantities."

The find could lure back foreign oil firms for more sophisticated drilling in the Dead Sea region, where the NRA recently began a seismic study to shed more light on the geological nature of the area, the lowest point on earth.

The research is concentrating on the Lisan area near the southern tip of the sea, where an American firm drilled an unsuccessful exploratory well in the 1950s.

Family hostilities cited as motive Youth said to confess to murder of cousin

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A 20-year-old youth has confessed to the murder of a nine-year-old boy after sexually assaulting in the Russeifa area of Amman late last month and police are compiling evidence to refer the case to court, informed sources said Tuesday.

According to the sources, the youth, a first cousin of Mubannad Saleh Jamal whose decomposing body was found buried under a pile of stones in Russeifa Cemetery on May 29, is believed to have committed the brutal murder to settle a family dispute.

Prior to killing the boy by hitting him with a stone, the youth, identified only as Y.K.J., also sodomised him, the sources said.

The body was discovered four days after the boy was reported missing, but the murder was committed a few hours after he disappeared, according to the sources.

Official police sources confirmed the arrest and confession of a youth in connection with the murder, but would not reveal further details.

Relatives of the victim contacted by the Jordan Times refused comment, apparently because of considerations of family links. There was no immediate means to establish the precise nature of the "family dispute" cited as the motive; nor was any explanation as to why the sexual molestation.

According to the sources who spoke to the Jordan Times on condition of anonymity, the youth is a construction worker as is the father of the murdered boy and a resident of the same neighbourhood; only one house separated their homes.

"The youth had worked with the father of the boy for some time and it appears that the two had developed hostility towards each other," said one of the sources.

"Apparently, he waylaid the boy on the evening of May 25 when the boy was sent out by the family to buy something and took him to the area of the cemetery," said one source.

"There he hit him and then sodomised him before killing him by smashing his head with a stone."

Earlier reports said that Mubannad was out buying vegetables and was carrying 500 fils on him.

The assailant left his work site at 6 p.m. as usual and apparently found the boy wandering in the markets, the sources said.

There was no sign of any struggle at the site where the body was found — between two tombs under a pile of rocks, according to the sources, who added that the body appeared to have been dragged from a distance of up to 100 metres. Bloodstains were visible along the route, they said.

The body bore marks of a severe beating, and identification was possible only by the shirt he wore, the sources said.

The boy's underwear was pulled down to the knee, and his trousers were found nearby, according to the sources. An empty can of beer had led to suspicions that the assailant (s) could have been drunk, but, the sources said, the arrested youth had no record of drinking.

The youth was arrested on suspicion Monday, two days after the body was discovered, and he confessed to the crime shortly thereafter, the sources said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Lebanese artist Shukrallah Fatouh at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artists Nawal Kattan and Dodi Tabban at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of works by more than 40 plastic artists from Iraq at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Photography exhibition entitled "Scenes from Palestine" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Marianne Naerobout at the British Council.

FILMS

- ★ Feature film entitled "The Big Red One" at 6 p.m. at the American Centre (110 minutes).
- ★ Feature film entitled "Brighton Rock" at 7 p.m. at the British Council (90 min.).
- ★ English-subtitled German film entitled "Einervon Uns Belding" at 8 p.m. at the Goethe Institute (1974, 106 min.).

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Human rights hinge on nothing else

IN A FEW days' time, a high level Jordanian delegation will head for Vienna to attend the World Conference on Human Rights. Until that point in time, there appears to be no coherent Jordanian perspective regarding the contentious issues that appear to divide the international community along developed and developing lines. With the Western world insisting on at least maintaining the existing consensus that distinguishes between basic human rights on the one hand and economic, social and cultural rights on the other, the poor nations of the world are seeking to exploit the Vienna platform to reshuffle the human rights cards in favour of the right to development and the cultural considerations of different civilisations.

Jordan happens to be in a unique position of belonging to both camps. In one sense, the country is still a member of the developing world and, in another, it has joined the democratic club after launching a workable pluralistic democracy in 1989. With such mixed yet complementary credentials, the official and non-official Jordanian delegations to the Vienna meeting can perform the distinguished role of mediating between the seemingly diametrically opposed groups of states. This should not be too difficult in view of the fact that there is some merit in both perspectives.

On the one hand, the Vienna gathering should not serve to turn the clock back on basic human rights. There is fear now that many countries with dismal human rights record would use the occasion and the arguments of the poor nations of the world to justify their poor human rights record especially with regard to the most fundamental among them. This is a justifiable fear and the Jordanian delegation must strive to support the proposition that respect of basic human rights need not and must not depend on the level of economic development or the peculiar cultural situations of each and every country.

To think otherwise would be tantamount to rendering the observance of human rights subject to the interpretation of each and every country. There must be a minimum international standard on human rights that all nations, big or small, rich or poor, religious or not, must comply with. The universality of human rights is already well enshrined in the United Nations jurisprudence developed over the past three decades. The Vienna meeting must not be allowed to disturb this painstakingly developed international consensus. Otherwise, the ideals and norms of human rights as reflected in various legally-binding instruments and treaties would be disturbed.

Still, the relevancy and impact of economic consideration on human rights as a whole cannot be underestimated. There are many civil and political rights that cannot be expected to be implemented without a minimum level of economic development. This posture deserves to be protected also by our teams to the world conference.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON a statement by the Information Minister about Jordan's Middle East stand, Al Ra'i daily Tuesday said the Kingdom had consistently made its position clear and has nothing to hide. Our position vis-a-vis regional local or pan-Arab issues needs no further clarification since our country has never adopted or supported stands that could be interpreted as compromising the national stand, said the daily. The minister of information's statement, totally denying rumours about a separate deal between Israel and Jordan, came as another proof of this country's firm and unrelenting position with regard to the Palestine question and the rights of the Palestinian people, continued the daily. Jordan, said the paper, cannot cede an iota of Arab rights, will not accept a separate deal and will remain committed to pan-Arab and collective action with regard to national rights, said the paper. It said Jordan is not obliged to reassert its position with regard to the Palestine issue, but the minister's statement in this respect came to further clarify the Kingdom's position for those who could still be ignorant of the facts and to refute all the allegations and false rumours spread around by hostile forces.

AL DUSTOUR daily dwelt on the outcome of a meeting in Amman by the foreign ministers of Arab countries involved in the peace process. The foreign ministers have now responded favourably to an invitation to take part in the 10th round of talks, to open in Washington on June 15, and by so doing they have reaffirmed the Arab World's clear position with regard to peace, underlining the Arabs' total commitment to peace despite the obstacles laid by the Israelis in its path, said the paper. This joint stand, on the part of the Arab countries, to pursue all avenues towards reaching peace means that the Arabs are determined to attain this goal, but at the same time cannot cede any of the national rights, said the daily. It said that the foreign ministers' final statement reaffirmed the role of the co-sponsors of the peace process, stressing the importance of their intervention in the coming stages to ensure and facilitate a peaceful settlement that would bring about a lasting peace. The short period of time separating us from the date of the 10th round of negotiations is of vital importance for the Arab diplomacy, said the paper. During this period, it said, the Arab diplomats should urge the co-sponsors to give more assurances and commit themselves to working for achieving a settlement.

Economic Forum

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

More than one idea

This time I have failed in finding an idea good enough for today's column. I grappled with the idea of highlighting the political costs of some of our purported economic "victories", such as rescheduling our maturing external loans, which will surely turn into losing ventures by national profitability standards. But I thought our foreign readers must not be bothered with such domestic affairs. The notion of assessing the indirect economic costs of these "victories" seemed very plausible. Such costs refer mainly to our soaring imports of all kinds of goods, luxuries and essentials alike, consequential on the open-door import policy decreed in the IMF-sponsored economic adjustment programme. The theme seemed very healthy but not grand enough to fill the column.

Another healthy-looking idea related to the economic content or potential of the possibly imminent political developments connected with the peace process. I thought that the best hope for Jordan to solve its latent and visible economic problems in a way that did not supplant social disequilibria with economic ones and did not create national frictions was to have a breakthrough in the ongoing peace negotiations. If that happened, the so-called peace dividend would enable Jordan to address those problems without having to go on with the nation-dividing policy of more and more taxes and fees. In this context, the peace process would look like much of an economic issue. Heightened economic pressure on Jordan, like the one bound to emerge from now on constantly from the need for external debt rescheduling, would be easily transformed into political end-products. The obsession of economists with blunt materialistic standards shamelessly blinds them to the noble social, humanitarian and political ideals.

At this point, I had noticed that historically, political developments propelled the Jordanian economy and even concluded that

political disasters were actually belated economic blessings. True, the consecutive events of 1948, 1967, 1973 and lastly the 1990 Gulf war were national political and military disasters but they transformed the economy of Jordan. First, they posed some sort of historic challenges which were duly responded to by that economy. Second, they brought in a lot of foreign aid and capital which were instrumental in helping the Jordanian economy to proceed along the path of progress.

But then one has to give due credit to the potentialities and capabilities of the Jordanians themselves who accommodated the historic swings and harnessed them in the interests of their economy. This is most evident in the case of the Gulf war which has been transformed from a national economic tragedy into a very small economic miracle. But here, one can easily miss the lesson of history. Jordan has an inherent political vitality; it is too precious a political asset to be left to crumble on economic grounds.

Another candidate was the overemphasis put by our current economic policy on checking the fiscal deficit. Such emphasis is not necessarily detrimental unless it takes place at the expense of other basic objectives. In the context of external indebtedness, the trade gap is much more important. The unchecked growth of imports under the impact of free trade can very well outweigh any positive achievements on the fiscal front. Indeed, stressing the fiscal targets and trying to achieve them through higher taxes and less subsidies at a time of high costs of living and soaring unemployment rates has already seeded social discord in the Jordanian society and fanned hostility between the economic policy and the private sector.

Now, how does today's column fare in comparison with past ones?

M. KAHIL



Gloom deepens in Belgrade as West gives up and Milosevic grows stronger

By Alison Smale
The Associated Press

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia — Serbia has moved closer to dictatorship as a newly confident President Slobodan Milosevic cracks down on what is left of democracy in a state plunging into economic and social chaos.

The West, which considers the Serbian president the chief instigator of warfare in Croatia and Bosnia, has had a big hand in strengthening him.

It took him seriously when he switched tactics under intense diplomatic and economic pressure this spring and sought a new role as peacemaker in Bosnia. But when he was unable to deliver, the West nevertheless withdrew the threat of military intervention to end 14 months of war in Bosnia.

That gave Mr. Milosevic room to settle scores at home. Although the worst violence in Belgrade in two years resulted, Mr. Milosevic appears able to remain securely in power.

Mr. Milosevic needed only 48 hours last week to oust the moderate nationalist, Dohrica Cosic, as Yugoslav president and to hit hard at the democratic opposition, whose leader Vuk Draskovic was arrested and beaten.

Authorities then threatened to ban Mr. Draskovic's Serbian renewal movement, the only significant opposition.

A massive show of police force in Belgrade to quell protests last Tuesday was intended to choke social unrest as Serbs grapple with inflation. At more than 10 per cent a day, inflation makes even food an expensive treat for many.

"Several weeks ago, the West decided to play the Milosevic card, and Milosevic is now using its confusion to clear up his outstanding business here," the Belgrade weekly Nin concluded.

"The West acts as if it is dragged by Milosevic," Mr. Draskovic said just hours before last Tuesday's demonstration and his arrest.

He noted scathingly of Mr.



Slobodan Milosevic

Milosevic's supposed conversion to peacemaker: "You cannot turn Al Capone into Mahatma Gandhi overnight."

The Serbian strongman, whose political creed is solely to maintain his own power, has forged a new alliance with extreme nationalist Vojislav Seselj, who was branded a war criminal by the West because his paramilitary units have committed some of the worst atrocities in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia.

The Milosevic-Seselj alliance controls all crucial levers of power: the Yugoslav Armed Forces, a massive security apparatus of

70,000 police and 70 per cent of seats in parliament.

The regime's brutality was shown in its treatment of Mr. Draskovic. The opposition leader and his wife were beaten by police, denied access to their lawyer or doctors, and detained without charge.

That this could happen even to a well-known figure with good contacts abroad signaled that ordinary Serbs should not even dream of protesting their miserable daily lives.

Regardless, apathy is immense. Outside Belgrade, there is little or no access to any opposition

media or points of view that challenge the all-powerful Belgrade TV and its pro-Milosevic propaganda.

Even in the capital, the worries of daily life grind so greatly on ordinary people that there is little energy for protest.

And nationalism remains a potent force. Mr. Seselj's radical party has risen from a banned group to the no. 2 political force in Serbia within two years, thanks to Mr. Milosevic's support.

Mr. Seselj advocates continued war in Bosnia and the creation of a "greater Serbia." He calls all Serbs who think differently traitors to the national cause and brags of punishing them one day.

As economic woes mount, exacerbated by tough U.N. sanctions for Serbia's support of war in Bosnia, Mr. Seselj's brand of right-wing populism can attract at least as much popular support as the weak and divided democratic opposition.

As in Weimar Germany, people cut off from the world and with little to lose will turn on themselves, battling it out on the streets and thus making a mockery of the nationalists' avowed goal of uniting all Serbs in one state.

Last week's protests revealed the desperation that will fuel such violence.

One protester attacked a heavily armed policeman with his bare hands. He seemed impervious to the baton blows that followed, as if in a trance.

As police went wild in their show of force, another Serb man wailed, "Why? Why?" then pummeled a policeman with his fists, repeating incessantly the amount of his salary — equivalent to about \$4 a month.

Stojan Cerovic, chief commentator for the independent weekly Vreme, predicted violence as soon as the West abandoned both the threat of intervention and the Vance-Owen plan for Bosnia.

"Soon, we will find ourselves in quarantine," Mr. Cerovic wrote. "If we cannot fight somebody else, we will have to start fighting among each other... In Serbia, the scene is set for the final act."

Children, the losers in Russia's new capitalist world

By Mark Trevelyan
Reuters

MOSCOW — "I've got no dad, and my mummy drinks... She's always hitting me, and I run away from her," said the little girl matter-of-factly.

Sashka, a shy, pretty six-year-old with a fringe of mousy hair, is sitting on the knee of a care worker at the Moscow Police detention centre for children who are battered, abandoned or have run away from home.

Living here alongside victims of parental cruelty are truants, young offenders, child thieves and even prostitutes as young as 12. Police bring in 30 to 50 youngsters a day.

Some, like Sashka, will be taken away from their parents and placed in orphanages. Most will be sent back home.

"They bring us kids from three of 18 who for some reason have left home. Either they've been left destitute or abandoned by their parents with nowhere to live and no adult care, or they've committed some crime and require immediate detention," said Deputy Director Pyotr Layenko.

"Our job is to help that destitute child, establish where he lives and send him home."

Russia's struggle to bury communism and build a new free market has brought hard times to millions of families and made children especially vulnerable.

According to one medical expert some 2,000 children and adolescents committed suicide in 1992, most of them victims of cruelty in the home. About 5,000 homeless children were picked up on the streets of Moscow alone.

The police centre houses about 300 children at any one time, at least one and a half times as many as in Soviet times. About 30 are of pre-school age, including several who were simply abandoned.

"They come from broken families or those where the parents are alcoholics," Mr. Layenko said.

"They abandon them in train stations, or they leave them behind at home and go off somewhere... the child wants to eat and no one pays him any attention."

The centre provides a temporary home to children from all over the former Soviet Union, including Caucasians and Central Asians who speak little or no Russian but come to Moscow to run away from home or enjoy the "romance of travel," Mr. Layenko said.

Boys and girls are segregated in separate four-storey white concrete blocks surrounded by high walls. The population fluctuates constantly as new children arrive and others leave.

Three-fifths have broken the law in some way — the boys mostly stealing, the girls frequently engaged in prostitution.

"Lately they've been getting much younger. We get 12 and 13 year-old girls with venereal disease, but most begin about 14. Before it was about 16 or 17, but nowadays they're taking up the oldest profession at a younger age," said the deputy director.

As well as routine children's illnesses like measles and rubella, diphtheria is increasingly frequent. Most of the children have their heads shaved to get rid of lice.

But despite the grim background to its work, the centre is more like a school than a prison, and the staff appear caring and concerned.

The children get up at eight o'clock and fill their day with craftwork, sports and films as well as counselling and traditional schoolwork.

Examples of their handiwork are mounted on the walls of corridors, as in any other Russian school. Letters to parents,

touchingly pathetic, are displayed on the wall of one classroom.

"Dear mummy, I will never run away again and never hurt you... mummy, I will try to come back as soon as I can."

Mr. Layenko has 150 staff working directly with the children. But complains he needs more. There is only one psychologist for the entire centre.

Alexandra, 17, has been brought here for the second time. She says she quarrelled with her mother and ran away from her home in Kostroma, northeast of Moscow.

She came to the capital looking for "hang out" with friends but had been twice detained by police who stopped her in the metro station without proper documents.

Tanya, also 17, ran away from her home near St. Petersburg. "My mother drinks the whole time. She says I don't do anything and I should be out working," she said.

Psychologist Tatyana Orekhova said both girls would probably be sent back home, while Sashka would go to a children's home because her mother was being stripped of parental rights.

But this sanction requires long bureaucratic procedures and some cases the centre is obliged by law to hand back children to parents who have abused them.

"According to one medical expert, some 2,000 children and adolescents committed suicide in 1992. Most of them victims of cruelty in the home. About 5,000 homeless children were picked up on the streets of Moscow alone."

"Until the mother and father are deprived of parental rights they can take back their child any moment and no one can take it from them without a court decision," Ms. Orekhova said.

Most of the runaways, she said, escape as a protest reaction — "they can't solve their problems so they just run away." Many are abnormally aggressive or have stunted physical growth.

Ms. Orekhova acknowledges shortcomings in the system. Many children discharged from the centre are never heard from again — they may go home, run away again and end up in similar institutions elsewhere.

But a depressing number come back here — sometimes as many as five or six times, according to Mr. Layenko. "It happens very often. Some don't want to leave, they say they prefer it here."

He says the present situation is far worse than when he first came to work at the centre in the mid-1970s.

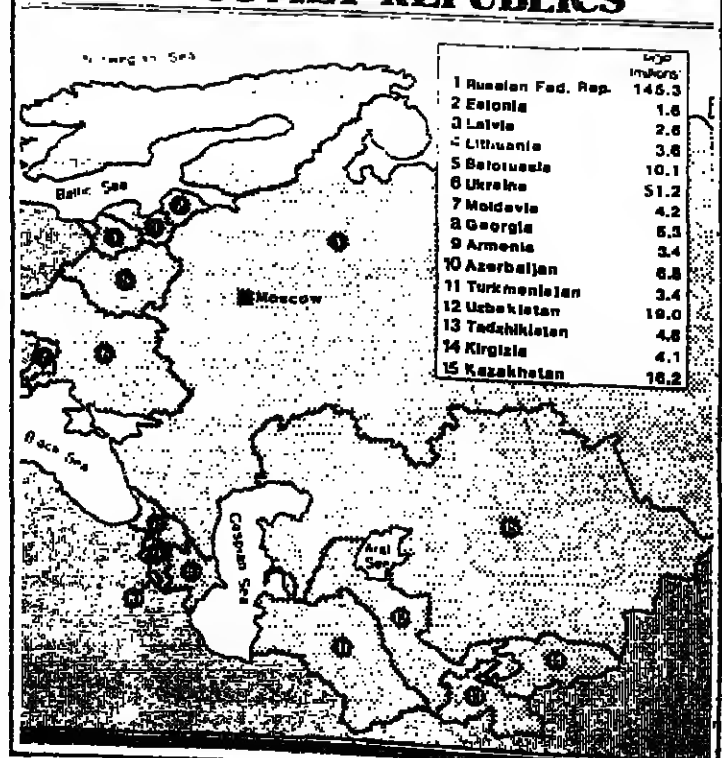
"There were fewer children, up to 200 maximum. The children were less neglected in the educational sense and less degenerated sexually... now these problems have increased and intensified."

He blames the deterioration of the worsening social and economic situation in the country and the civil wars raging in several parts of the former Soviet Union.

The government, says Mr. Layenko, has insufficient resources to address the problems.

"I think this is our entry into capitalism. Of course, under socialism there were certain minutes — quite a lot of them — and we decided we didn't want to live like that. But there were more social programmes, and they were closer to the people. Not any more."

THE SOVIET REPUBLICS



A luxurious and fantastic world of exuberant colours

By Ica Wabbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A world of fantastic fairy tales and bold, vivid colours make up the paintings of Marianne Naerebout, a Dutch artist who in 1985 left the Netherlands for the Middle East where she now lives.

The unique style that takes the viewer into the colourful realm of fantasy or nature is striking as much as the vigorous colours the artist generously uses.

Big-sized panels of canvas are brushed over the thick layers of colours left whimsically mid-stroke by a temperamental artist.

The reds, blacks, blues, greens and yellows are uncompromisingly just that; no intermediate, diluted, pale shades can substitute, in most canvases, the strong basics that make up the artist's perception of reality.

And no, it is not a pragmatic, cool reality she reproduces. It is

one of happy creatures and myriads of flowers, one of marvelous, carefree, bubbly imagination so typical of children, one that refuses to use the "normally" accepted norms of art.

winds and gales, rain or snow drops play havoc with everything in their path.

Or they recreate the nether world of lands stolen from the sea, the artist's motherland, in

not necessarily aquatic, to transport one in the world of Disney's mermaid.

Colours are brightly contrasting, turquoise stands next to red, black by yellow, blue by green and purple by dust pink.

It is a fascinating world, tempting to be joined and enjoyed. An uncouth snake is the main character of a wise painting where flowers (tulips, violets?) are taking a corner and cluster together to gossip about the world.

In most paintings, yellow, gold or black lines, coming straight from the paint tube, confine and define shapes, conferring a doctored quality to the paintings.

Exuding life and love of life, Ms. Naerebout's works can be seen at the British Council until June 14, 1993. You might find the panel arrangement a bit cumbersome and in the way, but perhaps the size of the display room is to blame.

DUTCH PAINTINGS

The tubes' colours flow freely over contours to create new ones, incoherent patterns or festive cakes are decorated with; it is as if an angry child had decided he did not like his work after all and chose to scribble all over it.

And all this splatting gives life to the paintings, creates movement and depth to the otherwise not so elaborate preoccupation with perspective and proportion.

In case of the abstract paintings, the daubs of colours may create a tormented nature, where

"Dutch landscape".

And finally they can, oddly, convey serenity and peace of mind, in two paintings where "unlikely" colours like pink and purple are used.

The floral and zoomorphic acrylics, where an amalgamation of vegetation and animals reigns supreme, challenge the imagination and subtly awaken the child in the viewer.

Deep sea life, where playful fish frolic next to eels, octopuses, otters, star and jelly fish, does not exclude flowers and plants,



Acrylic on linen, Dutch artist Marianne Naerebout's work on display at the British Council

Nowhere to turn for tired Asian workers

By Sonya Hepinstall
Reuter

BANGKOK — Many of the workers who have fuelled Asia's economic miracle are finding there's nowhere to turn to secure a piece of that miracle in their workplaces.

Government corruption, employers' callousness and ignorance among the workers themselves mean that for many of Asia's labouring masses, the appalling conditions that have given rise to some of the world's worst industrial disasters are likely to stay for some time.

"Everybody's always worried about 'will we be able to compete with Indonesia, with southern China, with Vietnam'," said one foreign labour expert in Bangkok. "There's no money spent on infrastructure, human or otherwise."

He was talking about Thailand, where poor safety standards contributed to the high death toll in the deadliest factory fire in history last month, but he could have been speaking of other nations around Asia.

In most of these countries, several of which are hard-pressed to keep social standards in line with double-digit growth, basic standards do exist for fire safety, protection against industrial hazards, maximum working hours and minimum working ages.

But enforcing them is just not a priority, even for the workers themselves.

In the Philippines, laws to safeguard workers' health are violated especially by small factories scared by the extra costs.

"Safety precautions do not merit the attention of management and workers until an accident occurs," said Homer Punzalan, spokesman for the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, the country's biggest union.

This will not change until workers become more aware of the standards they have a right to demand, he said. Experts in Thailand agree.

"Ask the unions, are they concerned about safety measures?" asked Chira Hongladaron, executive director at the Human Resource Institute at Thammasat University in Bangkok.

"They're more interested in the minimum wage."

As for corporations, the atti-

tude of many towards safety measures in these low-skilled industries is that it is just an additional cost.

"They still consider them (workers) to be unknown, unimportant, robotic parts that can be replaced," Mr. Chira said.

At least 188 workers, most of them women, died when Kader Industrial (Thailand) Co. Ltd's toy factory collapsed soon after a fire started on the first floor.

Workers say there were no fire extinguishers or fire escapes in the building, and safety measures had not been explained to them.

Police say the building itself was substandard, which was why it collapsed quickly, leading to the high loss of life. In this case, as in others, experts believe the insidious hand of corruption has played a major role.

Factory inspectors from India to Thailand are believed to turn a blind eye to safety standards in return for bribes from companies or managers who do not want to endanger their competitive edge with spending on expensive safety measures.

In Taiwan, local governments

are in charge of safety inspections, but union sources say officials usually inform employers ahead of the check.

South Korea's new president, Kim Young-Sam, is only now trying to tackle the corruption that labour analysts suspect has allowed officials to collect kickbacks from employers for years.

A big cause is that ministries involved are often understaffed and underpaid.

India's government says it is not in a position to maintain safety standards and provide adequate housing for workers, despite having a central Labour Ministry and a labour ministry in each state.

"We do the best we can with our limited resources," said Labour Minister Purno Sangma.

Thai officials complain that people do not want to work as safety inspectors in the government when they could earn much more as an engineer in the private sector.

In Jakarta, labour activists say that although there are a number of laws to protect workers, the manpower ministry does not have

enough officials to implement them.

In most cases, labour experts and workers agree the laws are adequate, but they need to be taken seriously.

In India's case, child labour is common despite a legal working age of between 14 and 58, strong unions and laws that are said to be generally pro-labour.

One reason could be a lack of a coordinated approach to enforcing the laws. In India each major industry has its own enforcement agency, some controlled by the central government and some by the various states.

But the main block to improved conditions is overall poverty and ignorance—workers in many of these countries may just have to suffer until their economies develop further.

Many hope the disaster at Kader will provide the impetus to paying more attention to the issue, in Thailand at least.

"To some extent (this) is the time now for people to reflect on what development is for, and realise that it is for human beings," said Thammasat's Chira.



Diligent Asian labourers, working in appalling conditions, have fuelled Asia's economic miracle (File photo)

Clash of civilisations

The West against the rest

By Samuel P. Huntington

WORLD POLITICS is entering a new phase in which the fundamental source of conflict will be neither ideological nor economic. The great divisions among mankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. The principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilisations. The clash of civilisations will dominate global politics.

During the cold war, the world was divided into the first, second and third worlds. Those divisions are no longer relevant. It is far more meaningful to group countries not in terms of their political or economic systems or their level of economic development but in terms of their culture and civilisation.

A civilisation is the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species.

Civilisations obviously blend and overlap and may include sub-civilisations. Western civilisation has two major variants, European and North American, and Islam has its Arab, Turkic and Malay subdivisions. But while the lines between them are seldom sharp, civilisations are real. They rise and fall; they divide and merge. And as any student of history knows, civilisations disappear.

Westerners tend to think of nation-states as the principle actors in global affairs. They have been that for only a few centuries. The broader reaches of history have been the history of civilisations. It is to this pattern that the world returns.

Civilisation identity will be increasingly important and the world will be shaped in large measure by the interactions among seven or eight major civilisations. These include the Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and possibly African civilisations. The most important and bloody conflicts will occur along the borders separating these cultures. The

fault lines between civilisations will be the battle lines of the future.

Why? First, differences among civilisations are basic, involving history, language, culture, tradition and, most importantly, religion. Different civilisations have different views on the relations between God and man, the citizen and the state, parents and children, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy. These differences are the product of centuries. They will not soon disappear.

Second, the world is becoming smaller. The interactions between peoples of different civilisations are increasing. These interactions intensify civilisation consciousness: awareness of differences between civilisations and commonalities within civilisations. For example, Americans react far more negatively to Japanese investment than to larger investments from Canada and European countries.

Third, economic and social changes are separating people from long-standing local identities. In much of the world, religion has moved in to fill this gap, often in the form of movements labeled fundamentalist. Such movements are found in Western Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. The "unsecularisation of the world," the social George Weigel has remarked, "is one of the dominant social facts of life in the late 20th century."

Fourth, the growth of civilisation consciousness is enhanced by the fact that at the moment that the West is at the peak of its power a return-to-the-roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilisations — the "Asianisation" in Japan, the end of the Nehru legacy and the "Hinduisation" of India, the failure of western ideas of socialism and nationalism and, hence, the "re-Islamisation" of the Middle East, and now a debate over Westernisation versus Russianisation in Boris Yeltsin's country.

More importantly, the efforts of the West to promote its values of democracy and liberalism as

universal values, to maintain its military predominance and to advance its economic interests engender countering responses from other civilisations.

The central axis of world politics is likely to be the conflict between "the West and the rest" — the responses of non-Western civilisations to Western power and values. The most prominent example of anti-Western cooperation is the connection between Confucian and Islamic states that are challenging Western values and power.

Fifth, cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones. In the former Soviet Union, communists can become democrats, the rich can become poor and the poor rich, but Russians cannot become Estonians. A person can be half-French and half-Arab and even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half Catholic and half Muslim.

Finally, economic regionalism is increasing. Successful economic regionalism will reinforce civilisation consciousness. On the other hand, economic regionalism may succeed only when it is rooted in a common civilisation. The European Community rests on the shared foundation of European culture and Western Christianity. Japan, in contrast, faces difficulties in creating a comparable economic entity in East Asia because it is a society and civilisation unique to itself.

As the ideological division of Europe has disappeared, the cultural division of Europe between Western Christianity and Orthodox Christianity and Islam has reemerged. Conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilisations has been going on for 1,300 years. This centuries-old military interaction is unlikely to decline. Historically, the other great antagonistic interaction of Arab Islamic civilisation has been with the pagan, animist and now, increasingly, Christian black peoples to the south. On the northern border of Islam, conflict has increasingly erupted between Orthodox and

Muslim peoples, including the carnage of Bosnia and Sarajevo, the simmering violence between Serbs and Albanians, the tenuous relations between Bulgarians and their Turkish minority, the violence between Ossetians and Ingush, the unremitting slaughter of each other by Armenians and Azeris and the tense relations between Russians and Muslims in Central Asia.

The historic clash between Muslims and Hindus in the subcontinent manifests itself not only in the rivalry between Pakistan and India but also in intensifying religious strife in India between increasingly militant Hindu groups and the substantial Muslim minority.

Groups or states belonging to one civilisation that become involved in war with people from a different civilisation naturally try to rally support from other members of their own civilisation. Decreasingly able to mobilise support and form coalitions on the basis of ideology, governments and groups will increasingly attempt to mobilise support by appealing to common religion and civilisation identity. As the conflicts in the Gulf, the Caucasus and Bosnia continued, the positions of nations and the cleavages between them increasingly were along civilisational lines. Populist politicians, religious leaders and the media have found it a potent means of arousing mass support and of pressuring hesitant governments. In the coming years, the local conflicts most likely to escalate into major wars will be those, as in Bosnia and the Caucasus, along the fault lines between civilisations. The next world war, if there is one, will be a war between civilisations.

If these hypotheses are plausible, it is necessary to consider their implications for Western policy. These implications should be divided between short-term advantage and long-term accommodation. In the short term, it is clearly in the interest of the West to promote greater cooperation and unity in its own civilisation, particularly between its European and North American components; to incorporate into the

West those societies in Eastern Europe and Latin America whose cultures are close to those of the West; to maintain close relations with Russia and Japan; to support in other civilisations groups sympathetic to Western values and interests; and to strengthen international institutions that reflect and legitimate Western interests and values. The West must also limit the expansion of the military strength of potentially hostile civilisations, principally Confucian and Islamic civilisations, and exploit differences and conflicts among Confucian and Islamic states. This will require a modernisation in the reduction of Western military capabilities, and, in particular, the maintenance of American military superiority in East and Southwest Asia.

In the longer term, other measures would be called for. Western civilisation is modern. Non-Western civilisations have attempted to become modern without becoming Western. To date, only Japan has fully succeeded in this quest. Non-Western civilisations will continue to attempt to acquire the wealth, technology, skills, machines and weapons that are part of being modern. They will attempt to reconcile this modernity with their traditional culture and values. Their economic and military strength relative to the West will increase.

Hence, the West will increasingly have to accommodate to these non-Western modern civilisations, whose power approaches that of the West but whose values and interests differ significantly from those of the West. This will require the West to develop a much more profound understanding of the basic religious and philosophical assumptions underlying other civilisations and the ways in which people in those civilisations see their interests. It will require an effort to identify elements of commonality among Western and other civilisations. For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilisation but instead a world of different civilisations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with others — The New York Times.

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Saudis call for firmer oil prices as OPEC meets

GENEVA (R) — Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil producer, put its muscle behind a call for higher prices Tuesday and urged its OPEC colleagues to abide by the group's output quotas as the best way for them all to earn more money.

Strategy talks got under way Tuesday morning to set production levels for July through September. Saudi Oil Minister Hisham Nazer told reporters he was not satisfied with weak oil prices languishing 3 a barrel below OPEC's elusive 21 target.

"They should be better," Nazer said, linking low prices to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries members' lax discipline in living up to their allocated pumping quotas.

Independent analysts estimate OPEC produced around 600,000 barrels per day (BPD) more in May than the 23.6 million bpd ceiling it assigned itself for the second quarter, helping keep prices under pressure in an amply supplied market.

Such "leakage" must end if OPEC is serious about bumping prices higher, and the Saudis have been turning up the heat on other producers to live by the rules, delegate sources say.

"We are going to insist on strict (quota) adherence," Nazer stressed to reporters, although he

declined to say what new production ceiling he would like to see the group agree.

Traditional pricing hawks Iran, Libya and Algeria have been pushing for the group to keep their production ceiling unchanged at 23.6 million even though demand for OPEC oil is expected to rise slightly in the third quarter.

"All I can say is demand is not very high and we need to be careful about the (third) quarter, so it is better if anyone has anything to say or wants more, to talk in the fourth quarter," Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Azagadeh told reporters as he arrived for the talks.

This was a direct reference to Kuwait, which demands a quota increase starting in July as OPEC promised the emirate at a meeting in February. It made the pledge to lure Kuwait back into the quota system, from which it was executed after retreating Iraqi troops torched its oil fields in the 1991 Gulf war.

Kuwaiti Oil Minister Ali Ahmad Al Baghli said he was ready to discuss the emirate's position. "We are always flexible and we shall remain flexible," he said.

But he added that "we are expecting the best from this meeting," and sources close to

Kuwait's delegation said the demand for a bigger quota remained on the table.

"The ball is in the others' court. Kuwait will see what they propose," one source said.

Nigeria also pressed for special treatment in boosting its quota, pointing out its economy was in dire straits.

"We will be looking for at least 100,000 bpd more," Nigerian Oil Minister Philip Asiodu said, referring to his country's current quota of nearly 1.8 million BPD. "I believe we will emerge with a satisfactory conclusion," he added.

Outgoing OPEC President Alirio Parra called in a keynote speech for a ceiling that would provide for "a reasonable recovery" in prices.

He gently chided the group for busting their quotas, saying OPEC was plagued by members' ignoring their own decisions.

"In order to capture OPEC's credibility, we must continue to make strong efforts in the direction of compliance," he said.

Gabonese Oil Minister Jean Ping succeeded Parra as president. Ping became his country's oil minister in 1990 and arrived in OPEC with a background in international diplomacy after being president of the UNESCO African Group in the 1980s.

French employers promise mobilisation for jobs

PARIS (R) — French employers' leaders, under government pressure to help combat record unemployment, pledged Monday to launch a national drive to train young people.

But they refused to halt mounting redundancies and declined to commit themselves to a goal of 200,000 extra apprenticeships requested by Prime Minister Edouard Balladur.

Mr. Balladur bluntly urged the industrialists to do their share to haul France's economy out of recession at a meeting with 29 leaders of the CNPF employers' federation.

Aides quoted him as saying his new conservative government had done a lot to reduce the tax burden on industry and create "a favourable environment for growth." The ball now was in the employers' court, he said.

CNPF President Francois Perigot said his organisation would

launch a national drive next week to make the most of the government's job-creation measures and provide work experience for young people.

But he said he had no right to ask companies to freeze layoffs if their economic survival was at stake, noting that the government too was closing army bases as an economy measure.

"Don't ask me to make promises about jobs for young people, he told reporters. "I believe this kind of promise has no foundation in today's confused economic situation. But I can tell you we will do the maximum."

Government and independent forecasts say the French economy is likely to contract by up to one per cent in 1993.

Before the talks, officials said Mr. Balladur was impatient with the employers' reluctance to reciprocate for his tax concessions and irritated by a spate of redun-

dancies which has taken the jobless rate to a record 10.9 per cent of the workforce.

But he showed no dissatisfaction after the meeting, telling a news conference: "Our entire country — companies, trade unions, government, local authorities and the public sector — has taken the measure of the challenge so that a great national solidarity effort can help us overcome this trial."

Mr. Perigot said before the talks that the government's revised budget "lack sufficiently powerful measures to save companies which are dying every day from suffocation."

Some senior industrialists have opposed the "strong form" policy pursued by Mr. Balladur and his socialist predecessor, Pierre Bérégovoy, and urged the government to devalue the currency, cut interest rates and go all-out for growth.

But aides said Mr. Balladur told the CNPF: "There will not be devaluation or a revival of inflation as long as I am here." He would not change economic or social policy, he said.

Employers worry that the benefits from Mr. Balladur's measures to stimulate construction and public works and cut payroll taxes might be partially nullified by a rise in taxes on income to plug a deficit in social security accounts.

The meeting took place amid controversy over attempts by some employers to force wage cuts on their employees in the recession as an alternative to redundancies.

Some firms have consulted staff by referendum on cuts in pay and working hours to save jobs after negotiating with unions.

But in the latest case Morin Emballage, a Sarrebourg packaging firm owned by the Swiss

group Alusuisse, gave its 450 staff until Monday to accept without negotiation a five per cent wage cut, cancellation of a planned 1.2 per cent increase and the withholding of a 13th month payment to avoid redundancy.

In a last-minute U-turn, Morin said Monday it would not go ahead with its plan because of the stir it had caused.

Labour Minister Michel Giraud — who had deplored the company's tactics and said it had nothing to do with Mr. Balladur's proposal that the government should make up the wages of employees whose pay was cut to save their jobs — said he had learnt of Morin's decisions "with satisfaction."

Trade unions and the left wing opposition have denounced Mr. Balladur's as an initiation to slash wages. The prime minister told reporters the idea was still being discussed.

Latin Americans drive for top GATT job

GENEVA (R) — Latin American countries signalled Monday their determination to seek appointment of a Uruguayan trade diplomat as head of the GATT world trade watchdog over a European Community (EC) nominee.

After some two weeks of discussion with other developing states, they decided 75-year-old Julio Lacarte-Muro would be their single candidate against Irish banker and former EC Competition Commissioner Peter Sutherland, diplomats said.

"We think we have the best candidate, and we think we can convince many other countries from other parts of the world to support him," one senior Latin American envoy told Reuters.

"We think he is the right man for GATT at this time."

GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, has called a special meeting of its ruling council Wednesday to hear whether there is consensus among the 111 member states on a successor to outgoing Director-General Arthur Dunkel.

GATT decisions are routinely taken by consensus, and over the past two months Indian Ambassador Balkrishnan Zutshi — chairman of its contracting parties or signatories — has been sounding out views on who should take over.

Mr. Sutherland, 47, has no direct experience of GATT. However, he has the backing not only of the EC and the United States but also of many other developed countries and some

developing states who say he will bring a new approach to the body.

Until the Latin American countries began active promotion of the Third World claim for a shot at the post, Mr. Sutherland had appeared almost certain to achieve consensus Wednesday and take up the post on July 1.

Latin American trade diplomats and some from other developing states say they feel Mr. Sutherland's assumption of the post has been treated too much as a foregone conclusion in an organisation where their countries are playing a growing role.

But until Monday neutral diplomats said the drive for Mr. Lacarte-Muro to take over — or perhaps former Colombian Foreign Minister Luis Fernando Jara-

nillo who is now out of the race — was likely to fizzle out well before Wednesday's vote.

"Now it looks as though they are determined to take it right down to the line, although I still think Sutherland will emerge with the most support and get consensus at the council," said an envoy from one developed country.

Latin American diplomats said they would be holding meetings Tuesday with GATT ambassadors from different parts of the world. "We are sure that if they were willing to listen to us, they will see the merits of our candidate," said one envoy.

But they declined to say whether they would insist on taking the issue to a vote Wednesday — an unheard of precedent in GATT whose three chiefs until

now have all been appointed by consensus.

The organisation was set up in the wake of World War II as a forum to elaborate international rules of trade and supervise their enforcement. Its first director-general was British and his two successors were both Swiss.

Asked if he felt a Latin American should now get the job, President Carlos Menem of Argentina told reporters in Geneva on Monday he felt it would be "a gesture of goodwill" but indicated he did not think it would happen.

"We would like to see it, but there are powerful interests who want it to be a European and I think it would be utopian for us to think we will get it now," he said.

Dollar dives latest depths in fall against yen

LONDON (R) — The dollar took the latest in a series of tumbles against the yen Tuesday, hitting fresh lows against the powerful Japanese currency only three days before crucial U.S.-Japanese trade talks in Washington.

The yen also flexed its muscles against other currencies in Far East trade despite reported Bank of Japan (BOJ) intervention to curb its gains. It set new post-World War II highs at 106.25 per dollar and 65.56 per mark, dealers said.

"The stronger yen seems to be

an unstoppable force at the moment. The market's really got the bit between its teeth for 105 per dollar," said David Brown, chief economist at Tokai Bank Europe in London.

By 1220 GMT the dollar had climbed out of the depths to trade at 106.70 yen, compared with 107.45 late Monday.

Tokai's Brown said Bank of Japan intervention would only have a temporary effect. "If the BOJ really wants to stop the yen in its tracks, it's going to have to cut the ODR (official discount rate)," he said.

Japan's discount rate is already at a record low 2.50 per cent after a series of reductions.

The renewed dollar fall started in Asian trade.

Jim O'Neill, head of research at Swiss Bank Corp in London, said the yen's rise was in part because the market had expected action to support the dollar Monday, after the Federal Reserve, the U.S. central bank, supported it last week.

"A lot of interbank traders bought dollars expecting central banks to intervene. It hasn't happened so they all piled out," O'Neill said.

Tokyo traders said Japanese life insurers selling Australian dollars for yen had also pushed the yen higher. They said the BOJ had bought dollars for yen intermittently, lifting the U.S. currency from the 106.25 low.

ASEAN planning 5,000-kilometre gas pipeline

SINGAPORE (AP) — The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) plans to link all six member countries with a 5,000-kilometre gas pipeline, a Singapore official said Monday.

The pipeline will link all existing gas fields with available markets in the ASEAN countries," Lim Boon Heng, senior minister of state for trade and industry, said at the 3rd international offshore and polar engineering conference.

He gave no details on cost or a timetable for building the pipeline.

Mr. Lim said the Asia-Pacific region held vast resources, including the Natuna Sea gas fields in Indonesia, the Ampa South-west and Champion fields in Brunei, the West Linapacan, Oton and Malampaya fields in the Philippines, and new fields in

Cambodia and Vietnam. The ASEAN countries are Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore. Vietnam and Cambodia now attend ASEAN meetings by invitation, and are expected to become members in the future.

"This proposed project is an example of the possible spending in this region in the future," Mr. Lim said. He added that total offshore expenditure in the region was estimated at more than \$68 billion for the first half of this decade.

Energy — particularly oil, gas and coal — is now the largest single sector in terms of both trade and investment in the Asian-Pacific region, Mr. Lim said. The region's demand for petrochemicals amounts to 50 per cent of global production, he said.

Dealers here said the dollar stayed steady just above the post-war low in European trade because the market was nervous of selling too many dollars in case the federal reserve intervened in U.S. trade later Tuesday.

Shortly after the opening of U.S. trade, dealers in New York said the Fed was rumoured to be checking dollar/yen rates.

"We've heard the Fed's checking rates," said a dealing bank source. "But they have not checked with us directly."

President Bill Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa meet in Washington this Friday for talks focusing on how Japan will slash its huge trade surplus.

Zimbabwe seen heading for second year of slide

HARARE (R) — Zimbabwe, driven to near collapse last year by a crippling drought and recession, could see its economy decline again this year in the face of high interest rates, inflation and controversial government policies.

Economists and market analysts, who had predicted a modest economic recovery for the southern African country after heavy rains broke the drought, are now revising their forecasts, saying negative growth of at least one per cent is likely.

The Zimbabwe Stock Exchange, a mirror of the country's economy, has stayed depressed since the start of the year, and analysts blame especially the high cost of money.

"High interest rates are killing businesses. Businesses cannot borrow to buy capital equipment nor service their debts. They have halted or postponed all expansion projects," a stock market analyst told Reuters.

Interest rates are hovering around 40 per cent and annual inflation, which soared to a record 50 per cent in 1992, is 30 per cent despite a spirited government effort to talk it down.

The high rates are blamed by economists on an unrelenting spending spree by the government, which has repeatedly invaded the money market to borrow for its development projects.

Government expenditure already eats up half the country's annual gross domestic product, one of the highest such rates in the world. Last week alone the state borrowed 151 million (\$24 million) from the market at interest rates of nearly 40 per cent in the latest of its forays into the cash-strapped market.

"Continued heavy borrowing from the market by the government is crowding out the productive private sector, which should be given priority in getting money to expand and try to ease the present high unemployment," a bank economist said.

"As it is, there are warning signs that some companies which survived the drought and recession of last year could collapse, adding to the country's growing problems," he added.

Zimbabwe's economy shrank by a record 12 per cent last year when a withering drought sent its key agriculture sector plunging by 70 per cent. At least 20,000 workers — or two per cent of the

national workforce — lost their jobs.

Zimbabwe's largest bank, Standing Chartered, echoed the view of several economists when it said this week: "Another year of decline is a very real possibility, given the preponderance of downward risks in both the domestic and global economic situations."

The bank noted that industrialised nations, which buy Zimbabwe's main exports of tobacco, cotton and minerals such as gold, were recovering only slowly from last year's recession, thus curtailing an export-driven recovery.

In addition, the prices for Zimbabwe's biggest single export earner, fire-cured tobacco, had crashed since the beginning of the year largely because of an over-supply in world markets and high state taxes levied on cigarettes worldwide.

Other analysts noted that despite a government drive to improve the country's investment climate, some policies such as the forcibly state takeover of farms to resettle landless blacks were apparently giving a negative image among foreign investors.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY JUNE 9, 1993
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The middle part of the day can bring considerable difficulties through misunderstandings and a breakdown in communications between people. Evening can be rewarding from a social standpoint.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You are now considering what you can best do to express your basic talent so you can get better returns from it and those most able to assist you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Home interests and what your standpoint should be in the days ahead can well be the motivating factor of your thoughts and studies today.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Consider any courses of studies in which you can engage that will better equip you to go forward in whatever you wish to do daily in the future.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Money and the good things of life mean a great deal to you and this is a time for you to crystallise how you can best obtain them.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your own personal ambitions can be seriously considered now as well as those who are most able to aid you to make them happen quickly in your life.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A good day to quietly get off alone or with trusted advisors to decide just what your goals are for the days ahead and to make a plan to get them.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A very good day to clarify in your own mind what your personal objectives are for the days ahead and to think out how you can bring them to yourself.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are not sure just what in the way of career conditions in the future and you would be wise if you discuss potential aims with a bigwig.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You like to think big and you have a day now when you can add to your present development by some new approach that brings more acclaim.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Think about how far you have advanced in your business development and look for further studies or experiences that can add to your present knowledge.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Seek out conservative influential persons who can give you advice in the directions that are important to you and decide future expansion.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are considering some changes in your surroundings and now you have the good ideas that will bring you more comfort and happiness there.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF.

By Glasbergen



"This instant spray-on hair doesn't work for mustaches."

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Horri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

AVUME
RUTYL
CEMESH
DREEME

Junior wants to go along

PEOPLE IN LOVE SELDOM TRAVEL IN THESE.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: EVENT FLOOR FITFUL TANKER
Answer: One of the identical twins was five feet tall. What was the other?—FIVE FEET, TOO

THE Daily Crossword

by Roger Coburn



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

1 Across: 1. Highway diversion
2 Across: 2. See you later
3 Across: 3. Lined up
4 Across: 4. Conspiracy
5 Across: 5. Tanker
6 Across: 6. Use a kitchen tap
7 Across: 7. Wagon, e.g.
8 Across: 8. Young salmon
9 Across: 9. Arctic bird
10 Across: 10. White poplar
11 Across: 11. Response abbr.
12 Across: 12. Sweets: size abbr.
13 Across: 13. Customary
14 Across: 14. Scarcely to
15 Across: 15. Director Kazan
16 Across: 16. Subject of Latin trio
17 Across: 17. A man who wasn't there
18 Across: 18. Twinkle
19 Across: 19. Privy
20 Across: 20. Tasty
21 Across: 21. Columnist
22 Across: 22. Barron
23 Across: 23. Nibbles
24 Across: 24. Evolving
25 Across: 25. Jury
26 Across: 26. supposedly
27 Across: 27. Dream signal
28 Across: 28. Rich
29 Across: 29. German soldier
30 Across: 30. Touch ground
31 Across: 31. Segregate
32 Across: 32. A bad Brown
33 Across: 33. Others: Lat.
34 Across: 34. Liberate
35 Across: 35. Insect repellent
36 Across: 36. Depression

DOWN
1 Down: 1. Northern
2 Down: 2. Mrs. Charles
3 Down: 3. Pitcher
4 Down: 4. Fracture and

5 Down: 5. Playing cards
6 Down: 6. Quote as authority
7 Down: 7. 371 C college
8 Down: 8. Edge
9 Down: 9. Address
10 Down: 10. Rowlands

11 Down: 11. Thin in tone
12 Down: 12. Authority
13 Down: 13. Stand up
14 Down: 14. African land
15 Down: 15. Auctioneer's
16 Down: 16. word
17 Down: 17. I sing
18 Down: 18. British man

19 Down: 19. Pleased
20 Down: 20. Breathing sound
21 Down: 21. to
22 Down: 22. Concerning
23 Down: 23. Smooth
24 Down: 24. Brads

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 642170
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 06/06/1993

| COMPANY'S NAME | TRADED VOLUME | PREV. CLOSING PRICE | OPENING PRICE | CLOSING PRICE |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| JORDAN NATIONAL BANK | 116,880 | 155.000 | 157.000 | 156.000 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 95,022 | 6.880 | 6.750 | 6.800 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK | 1,480 | 32.000 | 31.600 | 31.600 |
| MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK | 25,970 | 4.640 | 4.640 | 4.650 |
| INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK | 63,040 | 2.000 | 1.980 | 2.000 |
| THE JORDANIAN BANK | 90,763 | 4.600 | 4.600 | 4.600 |
| JORDAN REALTY BANK | 263,119 | 2.900 | 2.900 | 2.910 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK | 419,512 | 3.020 | 3.100 | 3.110 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 110,234 | 4.080 | 4.240 | 4.250 |
| JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK | 10,136 | 2.400 | 2.420 | 2.430 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 13,900 | 4.250 | 4.200 | 4.200 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 10,136 | 2.400 | 2.420 | 2.430 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 222 | 6.100 | 6.410 | 6.410 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 9,859 | 5.100 | 5.050 | 5.050 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 161,912 | 1.610 | 1.640 | 1.640 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 19,440 | 4.900 | 4.970 | 5.000 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 241,977 | 2.600 | 2.620 | 2.620 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 110,228 | 4.200 | 4.400 | 4.400 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 29,640 | 2.600 | 2.600 | 2.620 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 340,414 | 1.890 | 1.870 | 1.870 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 98,688 | 2.270 | 2.250 | 2.240 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 1,063 | 1.310 | 1.330 | 1.310 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 2,900 | 5.870 | 5.800 | 5.800 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 10,136 | 2.400 | 2.420 | 2.430 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 7,438 | 6.600 | 6.600 | 6.620 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 64,601 | 4.210 | 4.190 | 4.220 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 4,415 | 6.810 | 6.800 | 6.820 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 29,640 | 2.600 | 2.600 | 2.620 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 1,103 | 2.600 | 2.600 | 2.620 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 4,482 | 1.220 | 1.230 | 1.240 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 3,130 | 12.000 | 12.600 | 12.600 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 10,205 | 2.150 | 2.240 | 2.270 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 712,451 | 9.600 | 9.550 | 9.550 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 53,366 | 8.000 | 8.000 | 8.000 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 14,160 | 2.800 | 2.800 | 2.870 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 28,300 | 2.700 | 2.700 | 2.770 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 305 | 3.000 | 3.050 | 3.050 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 15,710 | 11.400 | 11.000 | 11.250 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 1,740 | 2.150 | 2.150 | 2.170 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 1,640 | 4.400 | 4.300 | 4.300 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 762,318 | 20.400 | 20.900 | 20.950 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 28,300 | 2.700 | 2.700 | 2.770 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 433,096 | 10.000 | 10.200 | 10.200 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 56,743 | 3.900 | 4.000 | 4.150 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 5,000 | 2.700 | 2.700 | 2.700 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 5,000 | 0.470 | 0.460 | 0.460 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 204,834 | 6.870 | 6.870 | 6.850 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 1,525 | 6.800 | 6.800 | 6.800 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 4,960 | 5.300 | 5.300 | 5.300 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 25,310 | 9.500 | 9.500 | 9.500 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 4,960 | 5.300 | 5.300 | 5.300 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 3,498 | 11.220 | 11.220 | 11.220 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 71,015 | 0.540 | 0.540 | 0.570 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 28,300 | 2.700 | 2.700 | 2.770 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 139,291 | 4.710 | 4.750 | 4.750 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 81,145 | 4.220 | 4.220 | 4.200 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 12,244 | 4.860 | 4.860 | 4.860 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 28,300 | 2.700 | 2.700 | 2.770 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 28,300 | 2.700 | 2.700 | 2.770 |
| JORDAN POSTAL BANK | 116,144 | 5.610 | 5.600 | 5.560 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 5,572,809 | | | |

No plan to liquidate Jordan Cooperative Bank - Nabulsi

By Ziyad Al Shileh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi Tuesday denied that the Jordan Cooperative Bank was being liquidated. He said the bank had run into difficulties due to lack of sufficient liquidity, but a special committee has been set up to supervise the bank's reorganisational process to enable it to function normally. In a statement to the Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times, Dr. Nabulsi said as of Saturday the bank will allow depositors to withdraw their money if their account does not exceed JD 1,000. Other depositors will be allowed to draw their money gradually, depending on the collec-

tion of the bank's dues which double the total amount of deposits, he said. Dr. Nabulsi said depositors should rest assured that they would not incur any losses. The total amount of deposits in the bank does not exceed JD 11 million, he said. The bank's estimated assets exceeded JD 20 million. Dr. Nabulsi noted that the JCO is a specialised money-ending institution and not a commercial bank, but it faced a shortage in liquidity and could not meet depositors' demands. "The CBJ will pursue serious efforts towards collecting the JCO's dues and would not be lenient with defaulters, he said. The deposits are sufficient to cover all debts, he added.



Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi

He also announced that the CBJ will offer the JCO sufficient loans to cover the amounts of and dues. The Council of Ministers earlier decided to form a committee to deal with the difficulties facing the JCO. According to Dr. Nabulsi the CBJ has no intention whatsoever to liquidate the JCO.

India to buy more Gulf oil

ABU DHABI (R) — India will import more oil from Gulf Arab states this year to compensate for a shortfall in supplies from Russia, an Indian official said Tuesday.

Falguni Rajkumar, joint secretary in the petroleum ministry, said India would increase the amount it buys under long-term contracts with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia.

It will also buy crude from Oman and Yemen, he added. "The main thing is the Russian sources have dried out," Mr. Rajkumar said in an interview. "We're trying new sources in this part of the world."

Mr. Rajkumar, who is in charge of refineries and the crude

and petroleum products trade, is part of an Indian delegation which ended three days of talks in the UAE Tuesday.

"Both sides noted with satisfaction Indian intention to purchase oil from the UAE in enhanced quantities during 1993-94," said the minutes of the talks, obtained by Reuters.

Mr. Rajkumar said India was importing more crude from the main Gulf Arab producers between April 1993 to March 1994 even though overall crude imports were expected to fall.

India expects to import about 28.9 million tonnes (578,000 barrels per day) of crude between April 1993 and March 1994, down from 588,400 b/d the year before because maintenance work will

Iran reschedules debt

TEHRAN (R) — Cash-strapped Iran has successfully rescheduled \$2.9 billion of overdue foreign debts over the past few weeks and could well overcome its short-term debt crisis by early next year, economists and diplomats said.

The latest rescheduling for \$1 billion overdue to a group of Japanese trading houses was completed last week, they said.

Like the terms for the other \$1.9 billion, the Japanese companies, which include such major names as Marubeni, Mitsubishi and Sumitomo, have given Iran 12 months of grace to repay the debt.

The overdue debt is for trade financing obtained under one-year credit terms which Iranian banks have not been able to honour due to a severe foreign exchange shortage.

The crisis hit Iran, which had an exemplary record until then, after imports went on a \$10 billion spending binge following an easing of import restrictions last August, the sources said.

Iranian central bank governor Hussein Adeli said Monday Iran was close on agreement on rescheduling \$2.5-\$3 billion of overdue short-term debt.

The economists believe this was in addition to the \$2.9 billion recently rescheduled which included a further \$500 million to Japanese trading houses, \$1 billion to ten German banks and \$400 million to five French banks.

Apart from \$600-\$800 million owed to other foreign commercial banks mainly in Britain and Europe, the economists believed most of the rest of the overdue debt was tied to export guarantees provided by foreign governments.

The economists said this was more problematic because the

central bank, which has guaranteed rescheduling so far, was reluctant to get directly involved with export credit agencies.

Some of these agencies have long pushed for central bank guarantees of their credit to Iran. But the bank has refused so far to become the ultimate guarantor of sales to Iran. It fears that credits for imports would become "sovereign debts" — making the government rather than the borrower responsible for them.

If the bank guarantees repayment of overdue debt to these agencies, the agencies may in future insist on central bank guarantees for all their credits.

The sources were largely optimistic about the outcome of the negotiations.

Mr. Adeli said the overdue debt was part of Iran's \$6 billion in short-term debt. The sources said in order to restore its credit worthiness, Iran was seriously trying to repay as soon as possible

its debt. Foreign banks were at present refusing to consider the bulk of requests for trade financing. Those solid Iranian merchants and institutions whose requests are accepted, are having to pay up front 18-20 per cent of the value of any letters of credit, they added.

Normal practice in the past was probably five per cent.

Iran is expected to complete the rescheduling of its remaining overdue debts and repay most of the rest of its short-term debts by March 1994, the end of its current financial year.

The sources said that if this is completed successfully, Iran's financial credibility would be largely restored. Banks should then expect to be repaid with a delay of no more than one month rather than have to wait and average of seven months as they do now, the sources added.

Hong Kong has \$67b invested in China

HONG KONG (AFP) — Hong Kong listed companies have forged deals in China worth a total of \$21 billion Hong Kong dollars (\$67.4 billion), an unprecedented survey of Hong Kong investment in China says.

The sum is equal to nearly a third of the total capitalisation of the Hong Kong stock exchange, with most of the money going towards infrastructure projects and property development, says the report by Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia, a unit of France's Credit Lyonnais bank.

Leading the pack in terms of total project costs is Hopewell Holdings, which has 100.1 billion Hong Kong dollars (\$12.95 billion) committed to China ventures, including a motorway around the southern Pearl river delta.

It is closely followed by Cheung Kong Holdings, the real estate flagship of Hong Kong's premier tycoon Li Ka-Shing, which has 90.5 billion dollars, worth of projects in China, the survey said.

While 62 per cent of all projects were in Guangdong province, which abuts Hong Kong, Hubei and Beijing is on the rise, Credit Lyonnais said.

Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

| Currency | New York Close Date: 7/6/93 | Tokyo Close Date: 8/6/93 |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sterling Pound | 1.5285 | 1.5218 |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.6195 | 1.6205 |
| Swiss Franc | 1.4545 | 1.4535 |
| French Franc | 5.4573 | 5.4650 ** |
| Japanese Yen | 107.11 | 106.33 |
| European Currency Unit | 1.2058 | 1.2037 ** |

** European Options to 1000 J.O.D. and 1000 J.O.D. per unit

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 8/6/1993

| Currency | 1 MTH | 3 MTHS | 6 MTHS | 12 MTHS |
|------------------------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 3.13 | 3.34 | 3.53 | 3.81 |
| Sterling Pound | 5.81 | 5.87 | 5.75 | 5.84 |
| Deutsche Mark | 7.75 | 7.50 | 7.25 | 6.75 |
| Swiss Franc | 5.00 | 5.00 | 4.88 | 4.69 |
| French Franc | 7.56 | 7.31 | 7.06 | 6.68 |
| Japanese Yen | 3.12 | 3.12 | 3.18 | 3.34 |
| European Currency Unit | 8.87 | 7.56 | 7.18 | 7.00 |

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. Dollar 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Date: 8/6/1993

| Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm | Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| Gold | 375.75 | 7.15 | Silver | 4.39 | .104 |

* 10 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 8/6/1993

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|---------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 0.6860 | 0.6880 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.0432 | 1.0484 |
| Deutsche Mark | 0.4235 | 0.4256 |
| Japanese Yen | 0.6439 | 0.6471 |
| Dutch Guilder | 0.3776 | 0.3795 |
| Swedish Krona | 0.0945 | 0.0950 |
| Italian Lira | 0.0464 | 0.0466 |
| Belgian Franc | 0.02060 | 0.02070 |

Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 8/6/1993

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Bahraini Dinar | 1.7970 | 1.8300 |
| Lebanese Lira | 0.0380 | 0.0405 |
| Saudi Riyal | 0.1826 | 0.1838 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | 2.2300 | 2.2800 |
| Qatari Riyal | 0.1858 | 0.1870 |
| Egyptian Pound | 0.1950 | 0.2100 |
| Omani Riyal | 1.7450 | 1.7850 |
| UAE Dirham | 0.1858 | 0.1870 |
| Greek Drachma | 0.3120 | 0.3200 |
| Cypriot Pound | 1.4140 | 1.4300 |

Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| U.S. \$1.00 costs | 1.2842/47 | Canadian dollar |
| | 1.6205/15 | Deutsche marks |
| | 1.8185/95 | Dutch guilders |
| | 1.4523/35 | Swiss francs |
| | 33.32/33 | Belgian francs |
| | 5.4625/75 | French francs |
| | 1479/1481 | Italian lire |
| | 106.45/50 | Japanese yen |
| | 7.2400/500 | Swedish crowns |
| | 6.8580/680 | Norwegian crowns |
| | 6.1970/2070 | Danish crowns |
| One sterling | \$1.5185/95 | |
| One ounce of gold | \$373.25/373.75 | |

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Muslim forces win control of key town in central Bosnia

SARAJEVO (AP) — Muslim forces have won control of the strategic central Bosnian town of Travnik, driving out thousands of Croats who sought refuge with Bosnian Serbs, U.N. officials and news reports said Tuesday.

Croats and Muslims were allied against the Serbs when the Bosnian war began 14 months ago, but the alliance has broken down on various occasions as the factions seek control of important positions.

The Muslim victory came the day after Bosnian leaders, in a desperate attempt to end the war, reluctantly accepted a U.N. peace plan they said would force Muslims into ghettos and reward Serb aggression.

Travnik is a mixed Muslim-Croat town, where tensions have been exacerbated by the arrival over past months of thousands of Muslim refugees from other war zones in Bosnia.

Croat forces driven out of Travnik in fierce weekend fighting attacked Muslim positions there early Tuesday, shelling it from the area of Vitez, 10 miles (16 kilometres) south, said Commander Barry Frewer, spokesman for U.N. peacekeepers in Sarajevo. But Muslim forces beat them back and drove them out, said Lesley Burgess, a spokesman for U.N. peacekeepers in Split, Croatia.

"The city is controlled by Muslim forces now, and HVO (Croat forces) headquarters is demolished," Mr. Burgess said. "Croat forces went northwest out of the town, and exited through Serbian lines."

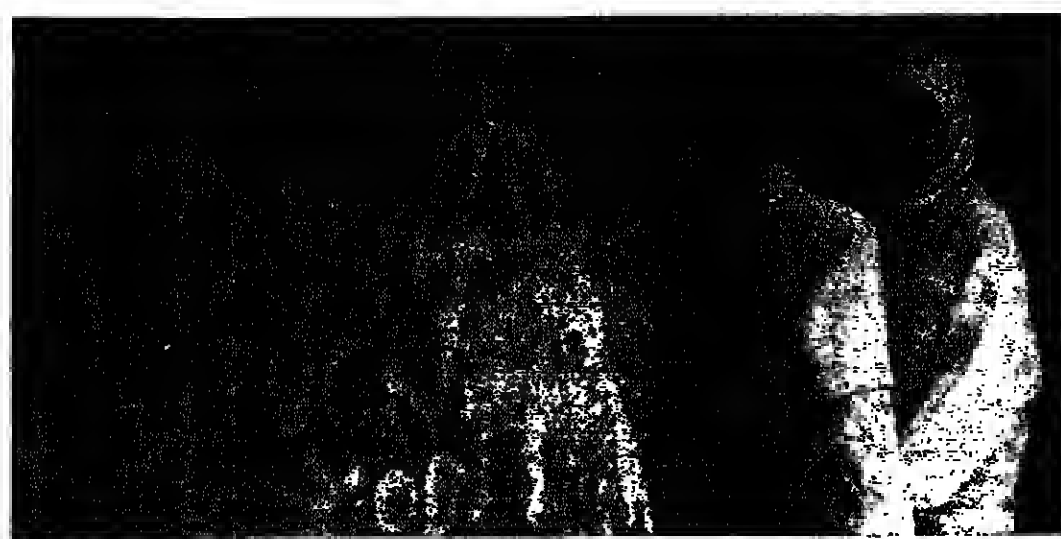
Some Croat soldiers apparently fled in civilian clothes, he said. House were burning in at least one deserted Croat village outside Travnik, Mr. Frewer said. Sporadic fighting also continued in outlying villages, U.N. officials said.

A Croat military spokesman said hundreds of people had died in the battle for Travnik, but Mr. Frewer said that report was unconfirmed.

Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban, in a letter to Bosnia's president, Alija Izetbegovic, and international mediators, charged that 350 Croats were held in Travnik "in some kind of camp, exposed to every torture, massacre and shooting."

"The Croatian population in that area is in danger of total destruction," the letter said.

Thousands of Croats were so terrified by the weekend fighting that they fled across Bosnian Serb lines on Mount Vlasica above Travnik, according to U.N. and Croat officials and media reports. Belgrade television, apparently anxious to emphasise that Bosnian Serbs were aiding fellow



Two Muslim girls stand in the doorway of their graffiti-daubed house in the centre of the Serb-occupied town of Travnik, Bosnia (AFP photo)

Christian Croats against Muslim forces, showed hundreds of Croats jammed into buses, trucks and tractors arriving on Mount Vlasica.

More than 138,000 people are dead or missing and 2 million others have been driven from their homes in a war that broke out after Muslims and Croats voted to secede from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. Muslims have been the big losers, now controlling just a few pockets in a

country occupied mostly by Serb forces.

The government Monday unconditionally accepted a U.N. plan that would commit up to 10,000 additional troops to guard civilians in six mainly Muslim towns that were declared "safe zones."

Top Bosnian leaders had rejected the safe zones plan, saying it would herd Muslims onto "reservations" and reward Serbs, who now hold more than 70 per

cent of Bosnia. They preferred an earlier U.N.-backed plan that would give them control of more land than they now hold and deprive Serbs of a chunk of their war-won territory.

But "facing the risk of a rapid escalation of fighting," the government accepted the plan. Its statement was issued as Serbs pounded Gorazde in the east and continued to block U.N. peacekeepers from reaching the enclave.

N. Korea rejects discussion of nuclear issues with Seoul

SEOUL (AP) — North Korea Tuesday rejected a South Korean demand that nuclear issues be put at the top of the agenda for a proposed border meeting.

North Korean Prime Minister Kang Song San said in a telephone message to his South Korean counterpart, Hwang In-sung, that the border meeting, if held, must discuss only exchanging special envoys to arrange for an inter-Korea summit.

In the message sent through the border village of Panmunjom,

Kang proposed that the meeting be held Thursday, and be attended by two vice cabinet-level delegates from each side.

The rival Koreas have exchanged several proposals and counterproposals for border talks since late last month, but differed sharply over the date and format of the contact.

In its latest proposal Monday, South Korea suggested that the border contact be arranged for Tuesday. The communist North

ignored the Southern suggestion in its most recent proposal.

Seoul officials see the North's move as part of a strategy to use the nuclear issue as a bargaining chip in talks with the United States.

The United States held two rounds of high-level talks with North Korea in New York last week but failed to make progress in trying to get the North to stay within international nuclear controls.

Spain's Socialists to form new consensus government

MADRID (R) — Spain's Socialist Party set about forming a consensus government Tuesday after its fourth consecutive general election won confounded most pundits — but left it short of an overall majority.

Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez's Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) captured 159 seats in the 350-seat lower house, 18 more than the opposition centre-right Popular Party (PP).

Opinion polls in the run-up to Sunday's vote predicted a virtual dead heat.

But 17 seats of an absolute majority, the Socialists still have to find a way of running the country but most PSOE leaders questioned the need for a coalition government.

"We've got time to decide what we want to do," PSOE deputy leader Alfonso Guerra told a news conference Monday.

"But maybe we could have a minority Socialist government which would look for parliamentary support, either on a permanent basis or on a (law by law) basis during the four year legislature," he said.

Spain's deputy prime minister, Narcis Serra, also suggested the PSOE could survive as a minority government, but said he expected to see significant changes in the new administration.

"Felipe Gonzalez already has in mind the team he wants to have around him," Mr. Serra said, adding that the result would be like "an enormous dose of vitamins" for the cabinet.

Mr. Gonzalez himself spent a quiet day Monday out of the public eye, making just a brief visit to the palace to report on the elections to King Juan Carlos.

At the start of the campaign he said he could govern the country without a coalition if he won 160 seats. Most likely partners in any pact would be the Catalan Nationalist Convergencia i Unio (CIU), which won 17 seats.

In return for support they are expected to demand more control over taxation in their region and a swift reduction in interest rates to help the flagging economy.

"If they make us an offer, then we'll listen," CIU member Miguel Roca said Monday.

New attacks against Turks in Germany

BERLIN (AP) — German police reported four more arson attacks aimed at Turks Tuesday, shortly after Ankara's ambassador to Bonn told his compatriots to brace for more neo-Nazi violence.

Ambassador Onur Ocymen recommended buying fire extinguishers, and getting better locks for doors and windows.

Turks have been the main targets in the latest round of violence, including a fire that killed two women and three girls last month in Solingen.

Police said 14 Turks suffered smoke inhalation after unknown attackers set a fire in the foreigners' multi-family home in Wuefrath near Doesseldorf.

Firemen put out the blaze in the staircase early Tuesday before it could cause major damage.

Foreigners, most of them Turks, fled from an apartment house in Frankfurt, after an arson attack fled by turpentine. No one was injured, and residents put out the flames in the stairwell before firefighters arrived.

Attackers also used a flammable substance to set a fire that badly damaged a Turkish restaurant in Hamburg overnight.

Another Turkish restaurant was hit by two firebombs in the southwestern town of Oberhausen-Rheinhausen, and the owner suffered smoke inhalation.

Pressure mounts on Ciampi after vote

ROME (R) — The fiery leader of Italy's pro-autonomy Northern League has stepped up attacks on Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi after protest votes made his fast-rising party the big winner in local polls.

Umberto Bossi, buoyed by success from the weekend vote, urged banker-turned-politician Ciampi to ensure rapid approval of a new voting system and then move aside for a general election.

The Northern League and other protest groups scored crushing victories in local Italian polls, humiliating corruption-tainted ruling parties and increasing pressure for national elections.

"Ciampi must come up with a new electoral law quickly," Mr. Bossi said in an interview with Daily La Repubblica Tuesday. "He's not the man to lead the country out of its current mess."

The leader of the Northern League, based in Italy's industrial heartland, accused Mr. Ciampi of failing to do his job properly in his stint as governor of the Bank of Italy, his role for 13 years until taking over as prime minister six weeks ago.

"He allowed 40 years of Italian savings to be eaten up when governor of the Bank of Italy," Mr. Bossi said.

Mr. Ciampi, who took office in April after Italians voted in a referendum to scrap proportional representation, rapidly reiterated his commitment to electoral reform.

"The electoral question is the absolute priority," he said within hours of hearing the results of the weekend poll.

The Northern League, with its heady anti-Rome rhetoric and demands for greater local autonomy, was the chief victor as 11 million Italians, a quarter of the national electorate, voted for the mayor and local councils in cities nationwide.

Mr. Bossi's fast-growing force swept the rich north and seized 41 per cent of the vote in Milan.

The poll was the most important test of public opinion since the April 1992 general elections in which small protest parties made important gains.

In the past year a corruption scandal, which broke quietly in Milan some 16 months ago, has become a national storm with hundreds of politicians and businessmen under inquiry and



Umberto Bossi

angry Italians demanding sweeping changes in the way they are ruled.

The Christian Democrats and their Socialist allies, the backbone of Italy's coalition governments in the past 30 years, saw their share of the vote plummet as electors rejected the two parties worst affected by the scandal.

"There is a new political centre. And the league is it," Mr. Bossi thundered.

Achille Occhetto, the leader of the ex-communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), whose vote stood up well in the polls, joined the clamour for early elections.

"There is no longer any relationship between the reality of the country and this government," Mr. Occhetto said, adding the PDS could become the leading force in Italian politics and head off the rise of the Northern League.

Mr. Ciampi, who heads Italy's 52nd post-war government, has pledged to have electoral reform on the statute books before parliament rises for its summer holiday in August, clearing the way for a general election in the autumn.

But opposition leaders fear that with the reform bill still to be properly framed, the ruling parties will attempt to slow the process to allow themselves time to regroup.

"We must see if they now try to use delaying tactics, bearing in mind that Sunday's vote would mean three-quarters of current parliamentarians risk being left at home," said Cesare Salvi, PDS spokesman for institutional matters.

N. Zealand calls on U.S. accept anti-nuclear stand

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger Tuesday called on the United States to accept its anti-nuclear stance, saying it was time for a thaw in the two countries' eight-year chill in relations.

Mr. Bolger, whose conservative government had been reported to be close to repealing controversial anti-nuclear legislation, said New Zealand's stance was not anti-American.

"It is regrettable that a democratic decision taken by the New Zealand people — to adopt a non-nuclear policy — is not viewed by the U.S. government for what it is," Mr. Bolger told the American Chamber of Commerce in Wellington.

Legislation introduced in 1985 by a left-wing government banning ships carrying nuclear weapons or powered by nuclear energy from New Zealand waters split apart the ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, U.S.) defence pact.

The United States has traditionally refused to confirm or deny if its ships are carrying nuclear weapons.

Mr. Bolger has been keen to repair ties with the United States and said last year the U.S. decision to remove tactical nuclear weapons from its warships was a positive move.

However the anti-nuclear leg-

islation has proved overwhelmingly popular in New Zealand and Mr. Bolger faces general elections later this year.

Mr. Bolger said Americans who visited New Zealand and saw its clear waters, mountains and clean air "have little difficulty in understanding what we are on about."

"The present stand-off has gone on for eight years — too long... it is time for a thaw," he said.

He said the two countries should start by improving political relations before tackling security issues and said New Zealand political leaders should be welcomed in the United States.

"It is understandable that we look forward to the day when the New Zealand prime minister is also welcome in Washington," Mr. Bolger said.

Mr. Bolger acknowledged he had no ready solution to the security problem. "I hold out no magic formula on which to base a solution. What I hold out is the hand of friendship," he said.

The United States has made it clear to New Zealand in private that it will not approve better defence ties unless Wellington acts to repeal the anti-nuclear legislation, according to Western diplomats in the New Zealand capital.

McDonald's breaking labour laws — employees

PARIS (AP) — Already under fire for undermining French cuisine, McDonald's is drawing protests by employees who say the fast food giant is riding roughshod on France's strong labour traditions. At 14 of the 25 McDonald's restaurants in Paris, demonstrators over the weekend handed out 15,000 leaflets and collected several hundred signatures against alleged labour law infringements by the company. Employees organised by the CFDT Labour Union say the company has failed to hold elections for worker committees on operations, hygiene and security. They allege the restaurants break rules on work contracts, shift schedules and layoff procedures. Several cases are being heard before government-organised arbitration panels. Telephone calls to McDonald's France went unanswered Monday. French labour unions remain relatively strong, and the minimum wage rises to 34 francs (\$6.30) per hour July 1.

Miscarriages higher in some IBM workers

WASHINGTON (R) — Higher rates of miscarriage were found among pregnant employees working with certain chemicals in manufacturing IBM semiconductors, medical experts reported. Researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health said two studies found pregnant women who work with ethylene glycol ether (EGE) had an increased rate of miscarriage. International Business Machines Corp. has been phasing out the use of EGEs and will have eliminated them from all manufacturing worldwide by the end of next year.

Rhinos use sunscreen, motorways crack in British heatwave

LONDON (R) — Rhinos put sunscreen on, motorways cracked and a waxwork of Prime Minister John Major had to be put in a refrigerator because it started to melt as Britain sweltered in a heatwave. Temperatures across the country Monday matched Sunday's record for the hottest day of the year at 79 Fahrenheit (26.1 C) and weather forecasters said there was more hot weather to come. Thousands of motorists bearded for the coast causing traffic snarl-ups while one motorway was closed near Staines Aerodrome in southern England as the road surface buckled with the heat. Rhinos at London's zoo needed to be hosed down and have skink cream smeared on their hides. Although they come from East Africa, rhinos Jos and Rosie were not used to so much direct sunlight because the thick hush of their natural habitat offers plenty of shelter.

Mystery U.S. illness linked to Asian virus

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico (R) — Health officials in the U.S. state of New Mexico said Monday they are increasingly convinced a mystery illness that killed 11 people is linked to an Asian virus transmitted by rodent excrement. They said blood tests revealed a fourth victim had antibodies to a class of viruses known as hantavirus, typically found in dried rodent urine and droppings in the Korean Peninsula and China. "As each day goes on, our confidence that hantavirus is responsible for this illness increases," C. Mack Sewell, state epidemiologist, told a news briefing. The virus, which has flu-like symptoms, may have been around for some time without being recognised, Mr. Sewell said. The virus has an incubation period of seven to 35 days. Early symptoms include a high fever and muscle aches in the legs, hips and lower back, and possibly coughing and redness of the eyes.

Teacher sentenced for 2 years for ordering student to eat feces

PEKING (AP) — A teacher who ordered a student to eat feces has been sentenced to two years in prison, according to an official report seen in Peking Monday. Liao Bangui, 26, a fifth-grade teacher in the southwestern province of Yunnan, also was ordered to pay the student 200 yuan (\$35) to compensate for economic losses and loss of reputation. The Xinmin Evening News (Xinmin Wanbao) reported in its Saturday edition. The report said Mr. Liao had discovered a pile of human feces beneath the blackboard in his classroom April 12 and heard that first-grader Yang Zaiyu was responsible. Mr. Liao told the child that if he didn't admit it was his feces, Mr. Liao would take an ax and kill him. When Yang admitted it, Mr. Liao ordered him to eat the feces in front of the class. Yang put a handful in his mouth and threw away the rest in the toilet.

Allen finds family troubles far from over

NEW YORK (R) — Film director Woody Allen was sadly mistaken if he thought a Judge's ruling in his child custody battle with estranged lover Mia Farrow would allow him to restore some of his battered image and get on with his career.

A New York state judge ripped into Mr. Allen in a 33-page ruling which called the film director's lawsuit to gain custody of his three children "frivolous."

Ms. Farrow and Mr. Allen had been feuding over custody of adopted children Moses, 15, and Dylan, 7, as well as their biological son Satchel, aged 5.

And left hanging over Mr. Allen was the allegation that he sexually abused Dylan one day last summer.

The charge was made by Ms. Farrow, who made a videotape of Dylan describing the incident.

Mr. Allen said the allegations were part of a smear campaign by Ms. Farrow.

Mr. Allen had been euphoric when medical experts from Yale University dismissed the allegations after a thorough investigation.

But in his ruling, supreme court Judge Elliott Wilk criticised the Yale report and sided with Ms. Farrow's experts, saying

"that we will probably never know" what occurred between Mr. Allen and Dylan. Because of these concerns, Mr. Wilk said, Mr. Allen cannot see the children without some kind of supervision.

"It's a real hit to Allen's reputation. It's the ultimate defeat," said Gary Skoloff, of Livingston, N.J., a past chairman of the American Bar Association's family law section.

"It's demeaning. It means he can't be alone with his own kids," Mr. Wilk also rebuked Mr. Allen for having an affair with Soon-Yi Previn, the 22-year-old adopted daughter of Ms. Farrow and her former husband Andre Previn.

Ms. Farrow split up with Mr. Allen when she discovered nude pictures of Soon-Yi Taken by the director in January 1992.

Mr. Wilk was clearly shocked that Mr. Allen did not understand that having an affair with the sister of his adopted children would put a strain on the family.

"My caution is the product of Mr. Allen's demonstrated inability to understand the impact that his words and deeds have upon the emotional well-being of his children," Mr. Wilk said in the ruling.

"Having isolated Soon-Yi from her family, he left her with no visible support system. He had no consideration for the consequences to her, to Ms. Farrow, to the Previn children for whom he cared little or to his own children for whom he professes love," Mr. Wilk said.

A clearly subdued Mr. Allen said at a news conference after the ruling was made public that there were positive and negative aspects to the decision.

"I was disappointed that I didn't get more visitation with my son Satchel. I think it's unfortunate, even tragic, for the kids that I didn't get custody of them."

"I am committed to them totally," he said before walking out without taking any questions. Ms. Farrow, in rare comments to the press, said she was glad the case was over.

"I hope I can go home to my children and have some measure of peace and to heal, and that we can wake up to a real normal day," she said.

But that will have to wait a while. The two will return to court Wednesday when Ms. Farrow will attempt to annul Mr. Allen's adoption of Moses and Dylan.



Actress Mia Farrow (centre) and her attorney, Eleanor Alter (right), make their way through reporters after the verdict came in her favour (AFP photo)

Kuwait lifts boycott of firms dealing with Israel

BAHRAIN (AP) — Kuwait said Tuesday it had ended its participation in an "indirect" Arab boycott of Israel that blacklisted foreign firms dealing with the Jewish state.

But its foreign minister, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad, told the Kuwait News Agency his country was still committed to an economic embargo that prohibits the Arabs from establishing direct financial or commercial links with Israel.

"Kuwait will not break off from the direct boycott of Israel. But Kuwait and other Arab states have broken off from the indirect boycott for considerations of national interest," the agency, monitored in Bahrain, quoted the minister as saying.

He did not say which other countries had taken a similar stance. Aside from Egypt, Arab states remain publicly committed to the ban, enforced by the Damascus-based Arab Boycott of Israel Bureau.

Sheikh Sabah, who also is deputy premier, said that the boycott rulings themselves "allowed for such a breakthrough if there were national considerations of a state to be taken into consideration."

He did not explain the national considerations that led to the decision, but cited as an example the import of military jeeps, manufactured by a company on the Arabs' blacklist.

The Kuwaiti move apparently was aimed at expressing gratitude to the United States, which led the coalition forces that rescued the emirate from a seven-month Iraqi occupation in the 1991 Gulf war.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait's chief ally, had said after the Gulf war that it remained committed to the boycott of Israel, but would not add new companies to the existing blacklist.

The Arab Boycott of Israel Bureau was set by the Arab League in 1951 to enforce a ban on economic dealings with the Jewish state.

It prohibited any direct commercial or financial dealings between the 21 league members and Israel. Foreign firms that do business with Israel also risk being placed on a blacklist and their

products banned from Arab markets.

However, the restrictions have eased over the past 14 years as it became more difficult to enforce a stringent ban on foreign firms while Egypt maintained direct and open dealings with Israel.

Egypt was ostracised by the Arab League when it signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, becoming the first Arab country to do so since the creation of the Jewish state in 1948.

But it was readmitted to the league in 1988, without having sever links with Israel that include a flow of oil that amounts to almost 25 per cent of the Jewish state's annual needs of 48 million barrels.

The United States and Germany, which reject the ban, have repeatedly urged their companies not to cooperate with the conditions set by the Arab Boycott of Israel Bureau.

The United States has been pressing the Arabs to end the boycott as a confidence-building measure to bolster the search for a Middle East peace settlement.

Israel welcomed the Kuwaiti decision and called on other Arab countries to follow suit.

"I consider the Kuwaiti statement to be positive," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told reporters. "I think that other Arab countries should do likewise."

"It is high time. They have always given different excuses, like settlement policy," Mr. Peres added, referring to Jewish settlement building in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"This policy had changed in the meantime," Mr. Peres added, alluding to Israel's curbs on settlement construction projects.

Mr. Peres' deputy, Yossi Beilin, said the United States privately informed Israel of Kuwait's step six weeks ago.

Mr. Beilin said the Kuwaiti step was significant because it was public.

"Even if it doesn't end the primary boycott (of Israel), it is certainly important because the moment it is public, it gives legitimacy — I hope — for other elements in the Arab World to join in lifting (the boycott)," Mr. Beilin told Israel Radio.



Security forces Tuesday examine the wreckage of car on the Cairo-Giza road after a bomb attack on a tour bus (AFP photo)

Palestinian delegation meets Qatari leader

DOHA (Agencies) — A ranking Palestinian delegation met Tuesday with the Qatari leadership as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) took another step towards rapprochement with Gulf Arab countries that have ostracised it since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, West Bank leader Faisal Al Hussein and Saeed Kamal, the PLO's representative in Cairo, met with Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the official Qatari News Agency said.

The delegation came from the United Arab Emirates, and officials in both countries assured them of support for the Palestinian people towards a just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr. Abbas said while in Abu Dhabi that he expected the Gulf tour would have a positive effect on the Gulf states' stand towards

the PLO.

"We have noticed the deep understanding, and honest wish from the UAE (United Arab Emirates) side to support the Palestinian people," he said before his departure for Qatar.

The PLO is urging the Gulf States to delay finalising any accords with Israel at multilateral Middle East peace talks until the Palestinian question is resolved.

"We might have differences in approach but the aim is the same: No normalisation of ties with Israel before a comprehensive peace settlement," a Palestinian source told Reuters.

The PLO's concern follows reports in recent days that Kuwait had eased its boycott on foreign firms doing business with Israel (see separate story). "An agreement in the multilateral setting would not be at the cost of the bilateral talks," the Palestinian source said.

Israeli 'copters' raid southeast Lebanon

RASHAYA, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli helicopters blasted the house of a Shiite Muslim activist in southeast Lebanon with two missiles Tuesday, wounding his wife and daughter, security sources said.

They said the attack came after four Israeli soldiers were wounded in an ambush by guerrillas in the village of Dalfala on the edge of Israel's self-styled "security zone."

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the four were part of an eight-member mechanised patrol attacked by two anti-armour missiles at 5:00 p.m. (1400 GMT).

They had no further details on that episode but said 40 minutes later two Cobra helicopters attacked the one-storey house of Kamal Musa in the village of

Zillaya in the western Bekaa Valley with wire-guided missiles. Zillaya is outside the security zone, nearly five kilometres north of Dalfala.

The Israeli army issued a statement saying the four were lightly wounded and taken to Rambam hospital in Haifa.

"One vehicle was lightly damaged. (Israeli) forces returned artillery fire, and helicopters shot at the source of the fire," the statement said.

It added that earlier in the afternoon a soldier from the Israeli-allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia was wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near an SLA force in the central region of the "security zone."

Yeltsin allies scent compromise

MOSCOW (R) — Some of Boris Yeltsin's allies suggested Tuesday the Kremlin leader might settle for a temporary deal defining the powers of president and parliament as a compromise to end Russia's political crisis.

Sergei Yushenkov, a liberal deputy close to the Russian president, welcomed a centrist proposal to postpone the adoption of a full-fledged constitution and hammer out a temporary "law on power" instead.

"I think it is a realistic way out. It is a definite compromise," Mr. Yushenkov told reporters on the third working day of a constitutional assembly called by Mr. Yeltsin.

The president's top priority, I think, is not the constitution but ending the crisis of power, which is becoming clearer and clearer and is fraught with the danger of

civil war," he added.

St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak said: "Major political parties and movements, realising all the difficulties involved in working out a single draft of the constitution, have stated preparation of a new law on power structures."

Mr. Yeltsin has summoned 700 delegates from Russia's power elite — deputies, regional chiefs, government ministers, businessmen, trade unionists and church leaders — to finalise a new draft constitution to haul the country out of political crisis.

The president complains his attempts to transform Russia and propel its ailing economy to a free market system are hamstrung by a constitution written for the disbanded Soviet Union and heavily amended since then.

U.N. backs Sihanouk on interim government

PHNOM PENH (Agencies) — The United Nations on Tuesday strongly backed proposals by Cambodian Head of State Prince Norodom Sihanouk for an interim coalition of winners and losers to ensure a peaceful handover after last month's elections.

The prince repeated on state radio that the national government he announced last Thursday, but scrapped the next day, was dead, but diplomats and U.N. officials see this as a tactical ploy as both sides jockey for a share of power.

"We recognise Prince Sihanouk's critical role in this process and support his efforts for national reconciliation," said U.N. spokesman Eric Falt.

"Prince Sihanouk is unquestionably called to lead an interim joint administration and we regard his leadership role as a key to a peaceful transition."

Prince Sihanouk, speaking after meeting the leaders of the defeated Vietnamese-installed government, Chea Sim and Hun Sen, said it was no longer possible for him to form his Cambodian national government.

His scheme would have united Chea Sim's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the opposition "uncincept party" which Norodom Ranariddh narrowly won the U.N.-run polls.

The older 77 was forced to shelve the idea 12 hours later after Prince Ranariddh responded with several conditions.

While saying he agreed to the idea in principle, Mr. Ranariddh said the CPP must recognise the election results and the makeup of the coalition should reflect the outcome.

1 killed, 14 wounded in Cairo bomb attack

CAIRO (AP) — A bomb apparently aimed at a tour bus exploded Tuesday on the road to the Pyramids, killing an Egyptian and wounding 14 people including five British tourists, authorities said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility but the blast appeared to be the work of Muslim extremists, who have targeted tourists and Egyptian officials in a 1½ year campaign against the secular government.

More than 150 people, mostly extremists and police, have died in incidents since January 1992. Three have been tourists.

Police said the bomb Tuesday was thrown from a railroad overpass on the road leading to the Giza Pyramids, eight kilometres away.

Salah Al Derwy, a tourism ministry spokesman, quoted police as saying the dead Egyptian was in a Mercedes automobile that was ahead of the bus. Both the bus and car were heavily damaged.

The state-run Middle East News Agency (MENA) quoted Interior Ministry experts as saying the bomb consisted of a metal container packed with explosives and nails. They said they believed the bus was the target.

One of the injured tourists, John Cook, told London's Independent Television: "There was a blast and all the windows caved in. The coach driver stopped, the young Egyptian courier (tour guide) was sitting in front of us, and she was very badly injured."

Mr. Cook said the injured Britons suffered mainly facial cuts. Dr. Rizk Ahmad Mahmoud, director of Al Haram hospital, said four of the British tourists — including Cook's wife Carol and Cecil and Margaret Sharp — were treated and released.

Another injured Briton, Leonard Philips, had a piece of shrapnel removed from his chest and required further treatment. Mr. Mahmoud said the group's Egyptian tour guide required surgery to stop internal bleeding from a lung injury.

The Interior Ministry, which is in charge of police, said eight other Egyptians were wounded by the bomb. It said one was in serious condition.

Journalists saw several damaged cars on the road, including the smashed Mercedes with blood on both sides of the front seat. A taxi had its rear window blown out.

The bus, which belonged to the travel agency Menatours, was parked at the hospital. Its right side was ripped by shrapnel, its windshield was broken.

Similar bombings have been blamed on the Islamic Group. A bomb packed with nails exploded at a Cairo cafe on Feb. 26, hours before the New York explosion, killing a Turk and a Swedish and an Egyptian.

It was the first reported use of such a device by the extremists. Since then, three of four bombs that have gone off in the Cairo area have been primed with nails to maim and kill.

King rejects separate peace

(Continued from page 1)

The Palestinian parliament-in-exile, had embodied the concept of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation based on the "free and voluntary volition of both peoples."

The Associated Press quoted a senior PLO official as saying Jordan and the PLO had agreed to form committees to discuss relations between Jordan and the West Bank during the three-year interim period of Palestinian self-rule.

"These committees will outline the visions of the scope of relations between Jordan and the West Bank during the period of Palestinian self-rule," the official said. "They will discuss the nature of the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship, which eventually will be a confederation."

The King and Mr. Arafat, who arrived here late Monday on what was hailed as a brief working visit, held two meetings Tuesday, one at the Royal Court which included a tête-à-tête round of talks, and another at the Guest Palace where the PLO chairman is staying.

Mr. Arafat said he and the King reviewed the outcome of the ninth round of peace talks and "the obstacles that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has faced because of Israel's intransigence and its continued attempts to violate the terms of reference, principles and basis of the peace process..." as contained in U.N. Security Council Resolution 242.

He described Israel's closure of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip since late March as a challenge to the U.N. Security Council and the principles of the peace process.

"Israel attempts to annex Jerusalem is not accepted even by the U.S.," he said. "Jerusalem is the capital of the state of Palestine which will be confederated with Jordan."

The Jordanian-Palestinian summit came ahead of a visit to the U.S. by King Hussein, who is scheduled to meet with President Bill Clinton at the White House on June 18.

PLO officials said Mr. Arafat requested King Hussein to urge the U.S. to intensify the peace talks, saying mainstream Palestinian support for the negotiations could erode if no progress was made.

Mr. Arafat urged the King to reaffirm to Mr. Clinton that no Middle East peace agreement is possible without an equitable Palestinian-Israeli accord, a PLO official said.

"Arafat wants the King to tell Clinton that the mainstream Palestinian support for the peace talks could be totally undermined unless the U.S. stepped in," the official said.

Mr. Arafat urged King Hussein to tell Mr. Clinton that "in view of the progress in Israel's negotiations with other Arabs, the Palestinians insist that Washington press Israel into entering a serious phase of negotiations with the Palestinians," said the senior PLO official.

Mr. Arafat is under pressure from hardline Palestinian factions to withdraw the Palestinian delegation from the talks. And opposition to the peace process could grow if the Palestinian-Israeli track of negotiations does not show tangible progress, analysts noted.

Mr. Arafat Tuesday chaired a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and Palestinian delegates to the peace talks. No details were released of the closed-door meeting, but Palestinian sources said some of the delegates were expected to voice their reservations over the American and Israeli approaches which they see as not conducive to bringing about a just and comprehensive settlement.

In other developments related to the peace process: — The U.S. State Department formally announced that Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan had accepted the American invitation to resume the peace talks in Washington on June 15.

The Palestinians are expected to

send a delegation to Washington this week for preliminary discussions. Mr. Arafat said Tuesday the PLO was awaiting American response to a 10-point memorandum the Palestinians had submitted to Washington. He declined to give details of the memo, saying it was up to the U.S. to reveal its contents.

But informed sources said the document sought clarifications on American viewpoints and positions on key issues such as the final objective of Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, the status of occupied Arab East Jerusalem, Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and linkage between the interim period of Palestinian self-rule and the final status of the occupied territories.

Mr. Peres, the Israeli foreign minister, said the occupation authorities might allow many Palestinians they expelled since 1967 to return to their homes in the occupied territories in addition to the 30 who were permitted to return in May.

Israeli officials said Mr. Peres was asked at a closed committee meeting about a Haaretz newspaper report that Israel had agreed to take back a large number of long-term expellees.

"There is indeed a possibility on the agenda, but this would not be done as a gesture to come to the peace talks," an official, who attended the meeting, quoted Mr. Peres as saying.

"But if they (the Palestinians) wish, we would do it during the course of negotiations," he said. Mr. Peres told the committee.

— Mr. Peres said he would "gladly meet" his Syrian counterpart, Farouk Al Sharaa, but denied a newspaper report that such an encounter was planned.

The Maariv daily said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had agreed to such a meeting next week in Vienna where Mr. Peres and Mr. Sharaa are to attend the World Human Rights Conference.

Israeli radio quoted Mr. Peres as saying Syria had turned down repeated offers from Israel for a meeting of foreign ministers.

Asked about reports of a meeting in Vienna, Mr. Peres said the Austrian capital was "a large enough city to accommodate 100 foreign ministers, including those who don't meet each other."

He added that "if the Syrian foreign minister will be ready to meet, I'll gladly meet him."

Maariv suggested Mr. Rabin wanted Mr. Peres to sort out whether Syria is agreeable to peace with open borders and full diplomatic relations, which Israel demands as a prerequisite to any pullback on the Golan.

Mr. Rabin has been having difficulty selling any troop withdrawal to right-wingers, particularly settlers in the strategic Heights.

At Mr. Rabin's request, the cabinet on Sunday rejected a proposal to hold a referendum before agreeing to return the Golan to Syria.

During a Labour Party meeting Monday on peace talks, Mr. Rabin kicked up yet another fuss by saying settler protests would not stop the return of the Golan. He was quoted as saying: "The Golan settlers can run around like hippies to demonstrations, it won't help."

Golan settlers accused Mr. Rabin of "changing his mind like a proppeller" about whether Israel would give up the Golan. Right-wingers said Mr. Rabin was creating negotiating difficulties by suggesting too strongly he would trade the Heights for peace.

— Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, speaking to reporters in Damascus, said: "There should be no separate or partial peace, and we cannot say that peace has been achieved or can be achieved if we overlook the Palestinian question."

Column 80000

Miyazawa seen as failure — Yomiuri poll

TOKYO (R) — An overwhelming 78 per cent of Japanese voters say Kichii Miyazawa should not be re-elected as prime minister when his two-year term expires in September, a newspaper poll showed Tuesday. Only 14 per cent of 2,100 respondents to the Yomiuri Shimbun survey backed the idea of Mr. Miyazawa, 73, serving another term as ruling party chief and premier. The poll showed 73 per cent of voters were dissatisfied with Japanese politics, currently mired in cynicism and corruption, and 68 per cent favoured a realignment of political forces. In an apparent reproach to Miyazawa, widely perceived as an ineffectual ditherer, more than half the respondents said the next prime minister should show leadership skills and be able to translate policies into action. The number of those citing youth as a necessary quality for the post doubled to 23 per cent from a previous Yomiuri poll in July 1991, just before Mr. Miyazawa took office. Asked who should succeed Miyazawa, respondents cited more than 20 names. Former Finance Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto topped the list with 11.2 per cent, followed by former Transport Minister Shintaro Ishihara with 10.9 per cent.

Ershad sentenced to 7-years

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — A court Monday sentenced deposed President Hussain Mohammad Ershad to seven years in prison for selling government-owned land at a discounted price to company owned by his wife. Monday's prison sentence is added to a 13-year term Mr. Ershad is serving for abuse of power and corruption during his 1982-90 rule. Judge Ansaruddin Sikdar also handed down a seven-year sentence to Mr. Ershad's wife, Begum Raoshan, also accused in the land deal. Mr. Ershad, 63, and his wife, 55, pleaded not guilty and said they are victims of political persecution. It was the 20th case of corruption and abuse of office against Mr. Ershad, a former soldier-turned-president. Mr. Ershad resigned in December 1990, bowing to violent street protests against his government.

Indian government roasted over power failure

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian newspapers gave the government a roasting Tuesday over a major power failure that left Delhi sweltering and sleepless on one of the hottest nights of the year. "Even by Delhi's own dismal standards of frequent power breakdowns through the summer," moaned the Hindustan Times in an editorial, the blackout was "in a class by itself." The lights went out across the city of eight million people minutes into Monday morning after the hottest day of the year so far, when the thermometer nudged through the 45 degree Celsius (113 Fahrenheit) mark. All day Monday, residents irritable after a botchless night, rallied against the electricity authorities and the government. The prime cause of the blackout was the breakdown of one of Delhi's main power stations. This was compounded by simultaneous failures in the grid linking north India, which prevented the capital from drawing emergency supplies and plunged several other northern cities into darkness as well.

Portuguese minister quits over sick joke

LISBON (R) — Portuguese Environment Minister Carlos Borrego resigned Monday night after a sick joke he told about a local health scandal caused political uproar. "I no longer have the conditions in which to continue with a serious environmental policy so I decided to present my resignation to the prime minister and he has accepted it," Mr. Borrego told TSF radio after a meeting with Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva. Mr. Borrego's downfall was caused by a joke he told in a speech about water resources at Braga University in northern Portugal Friday night. Referring to the recent death of 18 patients receiving kidney dialysis treatment at evora hospital in southern Portugal due to excess aluminium in the water, Mr. Borrego asked his audience: "What do they do with dead bodies in Evora?" "They take them away for recycling to get back the aluminium," was the answer to the joke, retold in many a bar since the scandal erupted last month.

Nations abusing human rights get U.S. military aid — Amnesty

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. government has systematically provided military aid to countries with poor human rights records, a violation of U.S. law, a human rights group said Tuesday.

The report by the London-based Amnesty International said the administration and Congress had ignored a legal provision that bars security assistance to countries that show a consistent pattern of gross human rights violations.

"The law has never been applied," the report said. "Each year that the Congress and the administration fail to act, governments receiving security assistance who clearly meet this definition are given the signal that the U.S. government cares

more about its relationship with them than about the people who are so grossly abused," the report said.

Among countries with rights problems cited in the report were longtime U.S. friends such as Israel, Turkey, Guatemala and the Philippines.

The report does not recommend an outright suspension of military aid to any specific countries but says the United States should "seriously assess" its assistance to countries that fail to protect human rights.

A senior State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, disputed the report's allegation that the administration has ignored the law. The official noted that security assistance has

been suspended in the recent past to Mauritania, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, Thailand, Peru and Guatemala. In some cases, assistance resumed after conditions improved, the official said.

The report also analyses the human rights record of selected countries which receive security assistance. Some examples:

The Israeli-occupied territories — Israeli authorities engage in torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians. There have been deaths in custody, extrajudicial killings, unfair trials and deportations. Israel receives \$1.8 billion in security assistance annually.

Guatemala — in almost two decades of military rule in Guatemala, thousands of deaths have

resulted from "flagrant breaches of human rights. Arbitrary arrest, torture, 'disappearance' and political killings were everyday realities... The choice of 'victim' and the manner in which the abuses have been carried out suggest the involvement of members of the official security forces." Guatemala is receiving \$400,000 for military training this year. (The report was written before the election Sunday of Ramiro de Leon Carpio, a noted human rights activist, as president.)

Turkey — "Torture is widespread and systematic in Turkey, especially during the first few days of detention following arrest. Torture and ill-treatment

continue to be routinely inflicted on political and criminal prisoners. Methods... include beatings on the soles of the feet, electric shocks, bosing with cold water under pressure and being blindfolded and stripped naked." Turkey is receiving \$3.1 million for military training this year.

The Philippines — a pattern of serious human rights violations and extrajudicial executions and "disappearances" have reemerged in the Philippines. "Aspects of the government's counterinsurgency strategy have contributed significantly to these violations." In 1993, the Philippines is receiving \$15 million in military grants and \$2.3 million in military training.

Other developments related to the peace process: — The U.S. State Department formally announced that Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan had accepted the American invitation to resume the peace talks in Washington on June 15.

The Palestinians are expected to